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THE

UNITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

A SYNOPSIS

OF

THE FIRST THREE GOSPELS

AND OF THE EPISTLES OF ST. JAMES, ST. JUDE, ST. PETER, ST. PAUL,

TO WHICH IS ADDED A COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE TO HEBREWS.

BY

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE, M. A.,

CHAPLAIN OF LINCOLN'S INN.

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me.—ST. JOHN.

(FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.)

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In Memoriam.

THIS VOLUME,

NOT OF COMMENTARIES ON, BUT OF STUDIES INTO,

THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES,

IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE,

BY THE AMERICAN MAURICE MEMORIAL UNION,

WHO HAVE FOUND "HIS METHOD" OF INQUIRING INTO THE REVELATION OF HIMSELF, THAT THE FATHER OF SPIRITS HAS MADE, IN MATERIAL NATURE, HUMAN LIFE; AND SACRED SCRIPTURE, AN ENLIGHTENING, COMFORTING, AND QUICKENING INFLUENCE, WHOSE BLESSING THEY WOULD FAIN SPREAD AND PERPETUATE, TO AID IN CONSECRATING THE NATION WHICH ESPECIALLY ASPIRES

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* Both with their lips and lives these two remarkable men confessed their spiritual debt to Maurice for inspiration and peace.

EXTRACT FROM THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THIS book is precisely what its name denotes it to be—a Synopsis. It does not profess to be a commentary, though each book is considered with some carefulness, and though I have often drawn the reader's attention to even minute points which I thought illustrated the writer's design. But my object was not to explain texts. I believe the force of particular sentences is not really felt, unless we can connect them with the purpose of the book in which they are found. I have sought for this purpose in each Gospel and Epistle which I have examined. I have desired still more earnestly to show that they have one common subject; that they refer to a Living Person; that when considered in relation to him they have a unity which we can discover by no collation of paragraphs. * * *

I have not troubled the reader much with what are called practical questions: first, because I have always found them very unpractical; secondly, because I do not think it is reverent to make use of the Bible for the purpose of pointing a moral or adorning a tale of ours. I believe it contains a revelation. I desire to ask what it reveals.

F. D. M.

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N.B.—All these lectures were delivered on the foundation of Bishop Warburton, and those on the Epistle to the Hebrews several years before those on the Unity of the New Testament. The interesting Essay on Development which makes the preface to the English Edition of the commentary we are compelled to omit on account of its great length.

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THE UNITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

LECTURE I.

MARK I. 1.

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

In these Lectures I propose to make a threefold division of the New Testament Scriptures. I shall begin with the first three Gospels: I shall go on to the Epistles of St. James, St. Peter, and St. Paul, connecting the Acts of these Apostles with their writings; I shall then consider all the books which are ascribed to St. John.

It may seem a strange, almost a monstrous, undertaking, to treat of such subjects within the space that I can allot to them. I am thankful for the limitation of that space. For the purpose which I propose to myself a large field would be a temptation rather than an advantage. I desire to inquire whether there is a leading truth which goes through these documents, which binds them together, which explains the differences of their form, and their apparent incongruities. Such a truth, if it exists, ought to present itself to us on their very surface. It should bear to be tested by minute criticism, but yet it should reveal itself in the general course of the narrative, in the enunciation

of the discourse. No ingenuity should be needed for the detection of it; the only business of the lecturer should be to show that this principle compels the reader to acknowledge a coherency in these writings, even though his theories incline him to deny it.

But if this is all that I hope to do, where lies the need of such an argument? These books have been the food of Christian men in all lands for centuries; learning has been exhausted upon them; harmonists, apologists, commentators, have devoted themselves to the defence and exposition of them. Must not the very suggestion, that the principle upon which they are written requires to be brought to light in the year 1846, involve either a sentence upon their truthfulness, or upon the sanity of the person who presumes to illustrate them?

I think so. If the principle which I am proposing to set forth has never been expressed in any of the Creeds of Christendom, or has only occupied a subordinate place in them—has never been felt to be the central one upon which every proposition in them is based—if this principle has had no influence upon the order and constitution of society in Christendom, if doctors, and schoolmen, and commentators are now to be informed of it for the first time, I confess at once that it cannot be what I pretend that it is, a key to the interpretation of Scripture, and to some of the greatest difficulties that have beset the recent study of it. But all that I desire to do is to bring forth into clearness and prominence, that which we are most of us professing to acknowledge, that which has determined, as I shall hope to show in some future lectures, the course of events and the formation of society in the modern world from the destruction of Jerusalem down to the present time. It seems to me that we have gone astray in the study of Scripture, not from excess of simplicity, but from excess of refinement, from looking to a distance for that which lies at our feet, from refusing to take words as they stand, and to believe that the writers meant what they say they meant. If so it may be a duty, a useful though a humble duty, to claim the books of the New Testament as a

possession for the wayfarer. When he realizes that possession, he will, I am satisfied, be more ready than ever to confess his obligations to the scholar.

I will at once explain what I mean by this statement. We commonly describe the first three Gospels as biographies of Jesus of Nazareth. We assume that they describe the different acts and discourses which showed Him to be the most perfect of men, the greatest of Prophets; that they give an account of miracles which proved His mission to be divine; that then by certain phrases and expressions of great value and significance, though scattered up and down the narratives, not forming the most prominent and obvious part of them, they claim for Him an altogether superhuman nature and origin. We say that it was reserved for the fourth Gospel to declare this nature and origin clearly and fully. We say that this fourth Gospel is far more than the rest a doctrinal Gospel, one from which the transcendent dogmas of the Creed have been deduced. We suppose that the main support, however, of those dogmas is to be sought for in the Epistles, especially in the Epistles of St. Paul. We make the great difference between the Gospels and Epistles to consist in this, that the Epistles tell us what we are to believe, that the Gospels set before us the divine example of life and action. This distinction, it is admitted, is not strictly accurate; the Epistles are practical as well as doctrinal, the Gospels embody high doctrine as well as an image of holy practice. Still, it is held that the division is good enough for ordinary purposes; it points out what are the leading characteristics which we are to look for in each class of writings. The Apocalypse, we are told, is less easy to define. Some would say it lies wholly beyond the line within which the every-day Christian should confine his studies; others affirm, that it is the development of a subject of great practical importance, less clearly treated of elsewhere—that second appearing of our Lord, which stands in such direct contrast to the humble appearance whereof the Gospels speak.

I fancy that I have given a tolerably fair view of the current

popular apprehensions in this country, respecting the books which we all hold with more or less distinctness, to possess an authority and character different from all other books. I shall not enlarge upon views which have been adopted elsewhere by persons who deny their authority and inspiration altogether. But I wish you to remark that these views, even those which strike us as the most extravagant, start from the premiss on which our popular notions rest. The modern Tubingen school, which has carried its speculations respecting the contradictions of Apostles and Evangelists further than any other, which assumes a direct contrast between the spiritual school of Paul and the Judaical school of James, Peter, and John, which limits the genuine Epistles of St. Paul to four or five, which affirms the book of Revelation to be really the work of St. John, *because* it is in direct opposition to St. Paul's doctrine ; which takes the fourth Gospel to be a work of the second century, one that for the first time established Christian theology upon an Alexandrian basis ; this school has brought its erudition and its modern philosophy to explain those discrepancies in the character and primary object of the books of the New Testament, which it supposes us all tacitly to admit, though we may express ourselves in ambiguous language respecting them. Now I do not say that if the notions which our commentators, our apologists, and our harmonists, have sanctioned, those which have crept into our schools, and are more and more pervading all our minds, are admitted, there is *no* refuge except in the conclusions of Bauer and his disciples, or in some others which may grow out of them. But I must confess my opinion, that the conflict with the learning of these teachers will be a very hard one, and ultimately a very useless one, if we are not prepared to reconsider the grounds which we and they have in common. We may now and then defeat them in a war of posts ; they may be detected in perversions of ecclesiastical history, or in abuses of their critical skill ; but the on-lookers will regard it as a question for critics to settle among themselves. Without entering into it, or understanding the arguments on either side, they will practically throw

all their weight into the scale of the assailant; for they will say, "You are resting your faith upon books which wise men, not positively repudiating Christianity, affirm to teach a number of different faiths. It requires much ecclesiastical lore to vindicate them, if you do vindicate them, from that charge. How can you ask ordinary laymen to take such books for the guide of their thoughts and actions as individuals and as members of society? Whatever they are, these books are not what our fathers deemed that they were."

There might be more difficulty in arriving at this conclusion if no attempts had been made to explain the Gospel narratives upon a principle which is compatible with the utter rejection of them as historical documents. A long tradition and habit of feeling are great protections against mere critical ingenuity. People would say, "These documents must have *some* common meaning; their opponents are bound to show what that is before they ask us to cast them aside." I need not tell you that the rationalist is aware of this demand, and is ready with an answer to it. A writer whose influence has been much more extensive among laymen and ordinary readers, than that of a more learned school like Bauer's can ever be, undertook to show, several years ago, what worth there might remain in the life of Jesus, though almost all the records of it were taken to be mere mythical stories. "It exhibits," he said, "a great idea of humanity; it is one of a number of experiments of the human spirit to conceive its own greatness and glory; it explains that notorious tendency of men to raise their benefactors into kings and gods, of which the heathen records present so many examples. It came in at a time when other religions were worn out, and when there was an evident craving for something more general, more democratic than the old national faiths. Its rise and progress were altogether consistent with what one might have expected from our previous knowledge of the state of the world, and of the decay of that which had been most venerable in it. The Christian Mythology succeeded to the older Mythologies because it had a more comprehensive human basis, and because its falsehoods as

well as its truths were adapted to the state of the period in which it appeared. It is not adapted," continue these Doctors, "to the state of our age. There is the same decay visible in its influence, the same timidity and unbelief in its professors, which were to be seen in the Jewish and Heathen worlds at the time it was proclaimed. But there is also a power among philosophers, and even among ordinary men, of appreciating the beneficent and human idea of it, which has not existed in any former age. Now is the time when we may disentangle that idea from its surrounding elements, and may present it to the world as the last result and essence of the facts and doctrines to which they have for so many centuries given credence."

No one, I think, can be so inattentive an observer of the thoughts and movements of our time, as to suppose that these words would have been uttered distinctly and formally by one man, if that which engendered them had not been working in the hearts of thousands. And therefore, whatever faith we may attach to the assertions of the divines of the country in which this doctrine was first openly propagated, that its teacher has not now any great influence over their schools, that he has long since been thrown into the distance by other and more rapid runners in his own direction, that he himself, and still more his followers, have seen the untenableness and impossibility of the half-faith which he tried for a while to preserve, we may yet remain just as strongly convinced that all the reasonings of these orthodox divines, and even all the earnest faith which their reasonings imply, have not made the dogmas of Strauss insignificant to them or to us. If we look, we shall find that they are silently adopted by a very large class of thinking and half-thinking people, not in one, but in every, section of our countrymen. We shall find that they have hold of the minds of the old as well as of the young, of the poor as well as of the rich. We shall find that they stand their ground against all the arguments which Paley and his school have urged in proof of the authenticity of the Divine Records; nay, that they are brought forward in the most popular forms, and before the most humble audi-

ences, as a triumphant evidence that these arguments are superseded. Nay more, the propagators of this doctrine maintain that Christianity has gained in their hands, that they have more reverence for its principles and essential power than we have. They ask, what the narratives which our harmonists present us with, of journeys to Nazareth and Capernaum, are to the recognition which they make of the wonderful, living, divine Truth, in the maxims and the life of Jesus of Nazareth? What our dry attempts to establish the greatness of His mission by miraculous evidence are, to their ready acknowledgment that His moral teaching undermined more falsehood and established more truth than that of any other man? What our endless debatings and controversies, to their recognition that He preached and exhibited an all-comprehending charity and humanity?

I hope the existence and the prevalency of such thoughts may furnish some excuse to those who want it, for the inquiry into which I am now entering. I have said that I believe numbers of students of the Scriptures, starting from the belief that the Gospels are primarily records of our Lord's life as a Teacher of Nazareth, and that the Epistles and the fourth Gospel are the main witnesses to His Divinity, will end in the conclusions of Bauer respecting the essential diversity of the Gospels and Epistles. I say now that I think a number of practical people who can scarcely be called students at all, but who have just that habit of thought about the New Testament which characterizes our popular teaching, will fly to the system of Strauss, and will fancy for a time that they have gained in their religious sympathies and faith by the exchange. But as I believe that neither one of these classes nor the other knows what it will ultimately lose, I do not say in religious faith and sympathies only, but in the love of truth, in the acknowledgment of any moral basis for individual and social life, above all, in that humanity for which they are ready to sacrifice every thing else; as I think that this Straussian doctrine is essentially feeble and narrow, in spite of all its pretensions, is essentially destructive of all the blessings which the Gospel has brought and will bring to the poor man,

though it seems to be devised for his sake ; I do not care how much I lose of their respect, or of the respect of those who oppose them, while I endeavor to resist their falsehood by confessing what seems to me a great and perilous one of our own.

Instead of beginning from our Lord considered simply as the Man of Nazareth, it seems to me that the first three Gospels, just as much as the fourth, begin with assuming Him to be the Son of God, and the King of men. To show how He fulfilled these characters is their object. All the discourses and acts which they attribute to Him are simple and natural upon that hypothesis, unintelligible and incoherent upon any other. It will be the purpose of my first Lecture to make good these assertions, first from a consideration of those facts which are common to the three Gospels, then by an examination of their characteristic differences. In the next Lecture I shall endeavor to show that the Epistles of St. James, St. Peter, and St. Paul, illustrating and illustrated by the events recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, exhibit the Gospel of the Son of God and His Kingdom in another stage, and under three distinct aspects ; but just as personally, just as livingly as the Evangelists themselves do. Finally, that the Gospel and Epistles of St. John harmonize those aspects of this Kingdom which we have traced in the other Evangelists, and in the other Apostles, and that the Apocalypse conducts the history to a crisis which all the other books had been prophesying of, a crisis which is the full manifestation of the Son of God and His Kingdom, and shows that as it was the Kingdom which fulfilled the meaning of all Jewish institutions and prophecies, so it would be the real foundation of all human society after these institutions were dissolved. If the facts looked at in the most simple manner, should seem to bear out these conclusions, the arguments which Bauer and his school have used to prove the diversity and contradiction of the New Testament books, will establish their unity. The arguments which Strauss and his school have used to prove that they embody the conception of something transcendently human, will show that their basis is essentially divine. Finally, the belief of

their authority will not depend upon an acquaintance with old traditions, or upon our power of understanding ingenious special pleas, but upon the testimony of eighteen centuries, which will declare whether such a kingdom as that which the New Testament says would come into existence, has come into existence or no. The last inquiry I have said belongs to another division of these Lectures: upon the former I enter to-day.

When I make quotations from records which occur in all the three Gospels, I shall take them from St. Matthew, because his is said to be emphatically the Ebionite Gospel, that which is most directly opposed to the doctrine of St. Paul, the teacher of the Gentiles.

THE PREACHING OF JOHN.

1st. The first announcement which is common to all the Evangelists is this: "In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judæa, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

The words "kingdom of heaven" meet us at the outset of our inquiry. They seem to be significant words. Possibly the description given of St. John's preaching and of his acts may help us to determine what their significance is.

Those who suppose St. Matthew to have been a bigoted Jew, and merely to have engrafted a carnal Christianity upon his old Hebrew notions, will readily admit that he intended by this phrase an actual sovereignty. They will say at once that he derived his notion of that sovereignty from the Jewish Scriptures. He was dreaming of the restoration of the kingdom of David. He calls it a Kingdom of Heaven, because he believed its power was derived from the Lord God of Israel. He does not the less mean one that was to be established upon earth. These views of the phrase, I say, will be at once admitted as *especially* applicable to St. Matthew by those who give him the character which Neological critics assign him; as applicable also to St. Mark, and in a somewhat less degree to St. Luke. I

cannot conceive how we can adopt any other conclusion. For a Jew to use this word Kingdom, and merely to intend by it what modern theologians intend when they speak of a "Christian dispensation," or a "divine and miraculous doctrine," is utterly impossible. Whatever notion any old Prophet attached to the words Divine Kingdom, when he spoke of it in connection with the son of Jesse, or with Solomon, or with Hezekiah, that we are bound to believe it must have borne in the mind of an Evangelist who had been bred up in the faith of these Books, and was thoroughly devoted to them.

What sense then *did* these words bear when they were used by Isaiah or Jeremiah? Did the kingdom of Solomon or of Hezekiah differ, according to their conceptions, from the kingdom of Pharaoh or of Hiram in *this*, that it was more externally splendid? I take the Jewish kingdom at the moment of its greatest magnificence, just when the temple had been built, in those days when no man counted silver any thing, when the treasures of the world were pouring into Jerusalem. Would not any one of the Prophets have felt that the glory of this kingdom consisted precisely, as it consisted at the time of its greatest oppression,—when the armies of Sennacherib had destroyed all the fenced cities, and were laying siege to Zion,—in the fact that the visible king was a witness of an invisible one, in whom all the real dominion dwelt? On what other ground than this do the exhortations of the Prophets to their countrymen, when any great calamity was threatening them, rest? Do they not tell them that they are not acknowledging the invisible King, that they have forgotten His covenant with them, that they are bowing down before visible things, stocks and stones? Do they not tell them to return to Him from whom they have deeply revolted? Do they not declare that He is coming out of His place to show them that He is their King, and the Ruler over the whole earth? Do they not say that whether the house of David, the people, the priests, trust him or not, He will prove Himself to be the King of kings and Lord of lords? Does any one dream that this language, King of kings and Lord of lords,

imports any thing less than this, or other than this, that He has dominion in a region which other kings are trying to reach, but cannot reach, that He sways the inner operations of nature, and orders the minds and wills of men? Does any one doubt that the seer is calling upon his people to turn from their gross, vulgar, slavish notions of mere external dominion, which were the root of all idolatry, to Him in whom all real, essential power dwelt without measure? So only would they understand the difference between a king of Judæa and a king of Babylon. So only would they understand what that full and perfect kingdom was which all their sore discipline was to prepare them for.

John, we are told, was clad in a raiment of camel's hair, he had a leathern girdle about his loins, his meat was locusts and wild honey, he preached in the wilderness. All these signs surely testify that he, as much as any old Prophet, came to withdraw men from visible things to an invisible Ruler. His stern and simple words contain the very essence of the old prophetical discourse. The people felt that they did; they went out into the wilderness to him. They asked him whether he was Elijah? They were sure that he had a message to the nation, and to each member of it. Their consciences responded to that message. They were not apparently bowing down before any idols, there was nothing in their circumstances to suggest a resemblance between themselves and those whom Elijah called to renounce the worship of Baal. But their hearts confessed the resemblance; they knew that they were idol-worshippers as much as their fathers had been. They knew that they, with their synagogues in every city, were as much apostatizing from the Lord God of Israel, as those who had their groves in every high place.

John put their conviction to the test. He came baptizing with water. He called upon Jews to submit to a rite which admitted Gentiles to the privileges of the Temple-worship. They were to confess that they had need of purification. And what purification? John spoke of it as of the most inward kind. It was for the remission of sins. He did not shrink

from explaining the meaning of his own sign. The most honored of the Jews were called a generation of vipers, were warned of a wrath to come, were told that they were not to say within themselves, We have Abraham to our father, for that God was able of those stones to raise up children unto Abraham. That no doubt might remain upon their minds whether this baptism imported the removal of some external defilements, or whether it denoted the most internal reformation, they were told that the axe was laid to the *root* of the trees, and that whatsoever did not bear good fruit would be hewn down and cast into the fire.

All this language, I submit, is perfectly consistent with itself; there are no symptoms of awkward patchwork in it, of some later refinement grafted upon a Judaical stock. Read it by the light of the Jewish Scriptures, by all means; you cannot read it by any other. But that light will show that at a time when the last gleam of native royalty had departed from Judæa, when it bore the most ignominious signs of a Roman province, when pretenders were continually arising who reminded the people of their ancient glories, and urged them to break the sceptre of the oppressor, there was a voice which spoke of the very kingdom which all devout Jewish rulers had acknowledged, as about to be manifested, which declared that to be the Kingdom of Heaven, because it was a kingdom over the inner man, over the spirit and heart, which insulted and set at nought all exclusive Jewish pretensions, at the very moment when it was asserting the greatness of Jewish privileges, which announced a crisis as at hand which would shake the whole of society, as it then existed, to its centre.

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST.

But say the three Evangelists, "John spake to the people, saying, I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost;" St. Matthew and St. Luke add, "*and with fire.*"

Whether we introduce those words or leave them out, the main idea of the passage is clearly the same. The expression *fire*, and the words respecting the *fan in the hand*, which follow, bring before us more distinctly the vision of One coming to purge, to sift, to judge, of One who will penetrate through all appearances, whose work is with the inner heart of the society, and of the individual. But the words, "He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost," contain that meaning, and fix our thoughts upon the nature of the power which He of whom John spake would exercise. The call to repentance was the call to an internal, spiritual act. John declares that the greater One will carry out perfectly that which he has done imperfectly, will strike more at the root of the tree than he had been able to strike, would show what his baptism meant, would give the energy which would enable men to do that and be that which he told them they must do and be. Let us never forget that these carnal, Ebionitish, Jewish Gospels, make this the foundation of our Lord's history. The ground of it, according to them, lies in the proclamation—"He comes to baptize with the Spirit and with fire." I call your attention to this, as one of the most obvious, superficial indications of their common intention, one which it requires no skill to discover, one which the most careless reader cannot overlook. I call upon you to watch each step as we proceed, and to say whether this superficial fact is not the indication of something which goes through the heart of every narrative, and which it is just as rational to suppose was interpolated into them, as to suppose that a bricklayer interpolated the idea of the Parthenon.

The story goes on, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered Him. And Jesus when He was baptized went up straightway out of the water, and lo! the heavens were opened unto Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove.

and lighting upon Him; and lo! a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

What a central place this narrative occupied in the Gospel history, what importance it had in the scheme of Christian doctrine, all the elder heretics perceived. Every Gnostic was bound to give his interpretation of it, and to connect it with his theory of the relation between the Jesus and the Christ. Those in modern days who reject the early chapters of St. Matthew and St. Luke, are bound in consistency to regard this as the commencement of the Evangelical records. Assuredly neither the one nor the other can have erred in supposing that it did hold a most prominent place in the minds of the Gospel writers themselves, and that they connected with it all that they tell afterwards of our Lord's Ministry. No doubt they have found a plea in the narrative itself for maintaining their charge of carnal and superstitious notions against these writers. If there are no visible signs of that which is invisible, if the belief of an actual Man being the Son of God is at once to be rejected as anthropomorphic, there need be no more debate upon the question; it is settled, by one comprehensive *petitio principii*. But if not, plain men will not be hindered by being told that the form of a Dove or the Voice from Heaven are merely Jewish or Pagan methods of projecting outwardly certain processes or experiences of our own minds, from perceiving that this record carries us into that deep and inward ground which philosophy is always seeking to reach, but has never found. That Kingdom of which John spoke as at hand, is declared to have its foundation in a living Person. He who had been always ruling it, is now revealed: "This is my beloved Son" *is* the revelation. It is of a Son of God, clothed with the Spirit of God that He may exercise dominion over the spiritual world and over all the inward powers of things, that the Evangelists are to testify. We are to see whether men so simple and brought up in so narrow a school, make good their magnificent pretensions; whether they do not betray, by some exaltation of the mere human Friend and Teacher, the vanity and incoherency of their dream; whether

they really speak as men would speak who were commissioned to set forth one who derived nothing from the accidents of His position on earth, every thing from his relation to a divine and invisible Father.

THE TEMPTATION.

The next step in the narrative bears the clearest marks, say all neological interpreters, of being mythical. It has nothing to do with the regular course of the story ; it has been introduced, like all legends of great heroes, to give the common events significance, whereas it really disturbs their sequence, and shows what a curious mosaic the composition is. I quite admit that if the Gospels are the history of the journeyings of Jesus of Nazareth for one, or two, or three years, from Judæa to Galilee, from Galilee to Judæa—if it is by our skill in tracing out the times in which these took place and their coincidence with Jewish festivals, that we are to measure our knowledge of the facts of the Gospel history and of their relation to each other—the Temptation stands awkwardly in our way. If, on the other hand, we take the history of the Baptism to be what it seems to be ; if Jesus was then declared to be the Son of God, if He was sealed with the Spirit, there seems precisely that connection between the history in the third and fourth chapters of St. Matthew, which the composers of our Litany recognized. "Thou art the Son of God," is the assertion of the Baptism ; "if Thou be the Son of God," is the form of the Temptation. He is endued with the filial Spirit ; he wrestles with the Spirit of disobedience. He will not separate Himself from Man by making stones into bread for Himself ; for Man is to live by every word of God. He will not cast Himself from a pinnacle of the Temple ; for it is written, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." He will not take the kingdoms of the world from Satan ; for it is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God." The idea of a Son claiming nothing for Himself, in all things trusting His Father, obeying His Father, is surely brought out here with a clearness, definiteness, simplicity, an absence of all pomp of

words, of all the ordinary accidents and coloring of a legend, which is at least very very strange. The idea of a spiritual conflict, of a battle with a spiritual foe, is surely set out with a freedom from the material appliances of the most vulgar as well as of the greatest artists, which you would scarcely be prepared for in a Jewish tax-gatherer; still less if the story of that Jewish tax-gatherer was afterwards embellished by some theological doctor. But does it not, I shall be asked, give a personality to the Spirit of Evil, and is not that characteristic just what one looks for in a legend? Most assuredly, I conceive, one cannot read the story without feeling that our Lord was engaged in a personal battle with a personal foe. It is no shadow-fight. There is nothing in it which bears the look of a dream or a vision. Every thing is intensely real. But the wonder is that this reality and personality should be preserved and sustained with such an absence of materialism. No image of the Tempter is presented to us, neither such a one as a middle-age painter would have given, nor such a one as belongs to the Miltonic conception. We feel that the Son of God, clothed with a human body, was not a Person in virtue of that body. We feel that the personality which belongs to the opposing power has in like manner nothing to do with an outward shape or visible circumstances. We are led to feel that there is a deep, radical evil, a spirit of evil, underlying all the shapes and forms in which it presents itself to us on earth. We feel that He who could reach to that radical evil, and dispossess those shapes and forms of it, could alone assert the dominion of the God of Truth and Love over the world. We feel that this radical evil is nothing original, nothing which God created, that it is essentially the spirit of disobedience, a perverted, rebel will, and that He who has the true obedient will must be the destroyer of it, the Redeemer of the Universe from it. Such an introduction to a history of a series of acts of redemption or deliverance, bears no marks of being transferred from some other records to a place for which it was not intended. If it has a meaning at all, it is in its right position there. The want of it would be a cause of real perplexity.

THE PREACHING OF JESUS.

"Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison," says St. Matthew, "He departed into Galilee." He quotes a passage which he says was fulfilled by His coming into the coast of Zebulon and Naphtali, and then proceeds, "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." St. Mark says, "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the Gospel." St. Luke says, "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about." He then describes His coming to Nazareth, where He had been brought up, His reading the passage from Isaiah, where it is written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." These passages will be connected, and reasonably connected, by a harmonist, as referring to the same visit to Galilee. I quote them to point out what seems to me a much more radical and important coincidence, that which concerns the nature of our Lord's preaching, and its connection with the foregone history. He, when He comes to Galilee, begins preaching the Kingdom of God, begins saying, "Repent; for the Kingdom of God is at hand." No other account is given in the first two Evangelists of the words spoken by Him who had been declared to be the Son of God except this. John the Baptist's message is precisely the message of the Christ. There is the same announcement of a kingdom, the same call to repentance, the same allusion to the fulfilment of the time, to some approaching crisis. Only this announcement is now called a Gospel. It is good news that the kingdom is at hand, that the time is fulfilled. Men

are to repent and believe this good news. St. Luke expands and explains the words of the other Evangelists. He begins with declaring that Jesus came in the power of the Spirit into Galilee. He shows, in a particular synagogue, what the kind of preaching was, which elsewhere, though not there, was glorified of all. His preaching is the announcement of One who was able to heal the sick and deliver the captives, because the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him—a Deliverer who was to undo chains which no one could undo who was not endued with a SPIRIT—the King who had dominion over the secret powers and the inner being of man was declared to be at hand. Men were to repent, that they might understand what His government over them was. To confess His dominion over them was to believe the Gospel.

CALLING OF THE DISCIPLES.

"And Jesus," says St. Matthew, "walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed Him. And going on from thence, He saw other two brethren, James the Son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. And He called them. And they immediately left the ship, and their father, and followed Him." St. Mark gives nearly the same account. St. Luke's is connected with the wonderful draught of fishes. But these words, "From henceforth thou shalt catch men," which are the key-words to his narrative, belong equally to both the others. Supposing we had no other narratives but these, supposing all that is peculiar to St. Luke's Gospel was omitted, supposing we had heard nothing before of a Kingdom, or of a Son of God, our first conclusion, I think, would be, "This story, told with such severe simplicity, in such few words, is certainly intended to describe the way in which some royal person claimed

authority over the humble men about him, took them into his service, assigned to them some high office, the nature of which they were but little able to apprehend, but which implied some very remarkable influence and ascendancy over their fellow-creatures." If then we found that all the previous records seemed to speak of such a King, of a mysterious authority which He exercised, and which He was come to assert and use on behalf of human creatures, we should certainly think that this narrative stood in a very close and natural relation to the other. Upon any other hypothesis than this, if any other feeling or conviction possessed the mind of the writer, we should certainly look for quite a different phraseology, one much less direct and simple, but also much less august.

THE MIRACLES.

"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria, and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy. And He healed them." This is the announcement in St. Matthew's Gospel which immediately follows the call of the disciples. If you turn to the passage in St. Mark, from the 21st to the 35th verses of the first chapter, you will find that he speaks especially of one man in a synagogue who had an unclean spirit, and who cried out, "Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God;" that he then alludes to the cure of Simon's wife's mother of a fever, then to His healing many who were sick of many diseases, and casting out many devils. If you turn to the passage in St. Luke, from the 16th to the 44th verses of the fourth chapter, you will find continual allusions to cures and healings, the same account of casting out

the unclean spirit in the synagogue which we had in St. Mark, the same reference to the cure of Simon's wife's mother, concluding with the words "Devils also came out of many, crying out and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God."

If you read and compare these different passages carefully, you will be struck, I think, with nothing more than the close blending of what is called the miraculous part of the story with that which refers to the preaching. "He preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, *and* healed all manner of sickness," says St. Matthew. "He taught them," says St. Mark, "as one having authority, and not as the scribes; *and* there was in their synagogue a man having an unclean spirit, etc. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority commandeth He the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him." The same, or nearly the same words, are repeated in St. Luke, in nearly the same connection; and the whole narrative in his fifth chapter assumes and illustrates, even more than those in the other two Evangelists, the connection between the "doctrine," and the "word," and these acts of "authority."

Now, supposing the words, "preaching the Kingdom of God," were taken as I have taken them literally, supposing the actual King of the world was coming to claim and assert His Kingdom, supposing He who by His word had given life and breath to all creatures, was really come to show Himself to His creatures, and to claim their homage; such a connection as this would surely be most natural. You would not expect the Evangelist to say, as we are wont to say, "Christ delivered this beautiful and touching discourse, and then to make it known that He had a high commission, and that He ought to be listened to, He put forth strange, novel, unwonted powers." You would expect them to say just as they do say, He declared His kingdom, and He healed the sick. He used the powers which He had always been using; He declared who it was from whom all healing had always come.

There would be many other indications which would show

which of these two views of our Lord's character and objects was the ruling one in the minds of the Evangelists. If they were writing the legend of a great hero or saint, who was to be exhibited as doing things more extraordinary than man had ever done, the acts represented would be of as outward and glaring a kind as possible. The common physician labors by getting at the secret source of diseases to overcome the outward symptoms. The legendary miracle-worker by touches and charms acts upon the direct, palpable malady which is presented to him, and lets all the world admire how rapidly it has disappeared. Supposing, on the other hand, a writer to represent one who had the dominion over all the secret powers and springs of human life, whose servant the physician had been, by whose wisdom the physician had acted, when he sought to trace the sign home to its principle, you would not wonder if he told you that this Person spoke to something within the man, and set that right first, that when he had given the blessing He did not care that it should be made known; that He referred to the disappearance of the external symptoms or manifestations of disease merely as proofs of a radical cure. These are characteristics of the Evangelical narratives; every one knows that they are; every one is more or less struck with them. They are taken notice of as indications of the simplicity of the writers, as signs of the absence of strain and effort at display in their narratives; they are not dwelt upon, I think, as marking the very purport of these narratives.

In close relation to this subject stand the allusions to the casting out of devils, which recur so frequently in all the passages I have quoted. You cannot help perceiving that the Evangelists connect particular kinds of sickness with diabolical possession; but that they do in some sort leave the impression upon our mind, that all sickness has this origin. At any rate, they direct our attention to this exercise of power as the most characteristic of Christ, as that which explains all His other exercises of it. This is a point which the commentators on the Gospels are in general rather anxious to pass over. They regard it as a difficulty to be got rid of in one way or another.

Some may take the way of saying that the Evangelists adapted themselves to the Jewish mode of speaking, some may say that possession belonged to that particular age, some may urge cases to prove that it has not been quite unknown in any age, some may talk of the anthropomorphism and superstition which were natural in such writers. These last are plausible and high-sounding words; whether those who use them glibly and habitually have ever really considered their meaning, is another question. By anthropomorphism I understand conceiving that which is spiritual under a human shape; I do not find the Evangelists speaking of the devils as having any human shapes. By superstition I understand the setting that above us which is properly beneath, or making our object of worship an object of fear. I find the Evangelists not setting up the devils as powers above, but as powers working within; I find them representing the Christ, not as teaching men to fear them and worship them, but as delivering men from them, and teaching men to worship God. And if that be the object which all these acts of power and majesty aim at, I submit that they are at least in marvellous accordance with the story which stood at the commencement of these Gospels, and seemed a preface to them. He who was proclaimed to be the Son of God, and was endued with the Spirit of God, was led up by that Spirit into the wilderness, and was tempted of the devil. He warred with that radical Spirit of disobedience which had asserted dominion over human creatures, and had sought to make them his servants: He now wars with all the forms in which that evil power is working for men's mischief. That power is most directly, personally manifested in whatever concerns man personally, in whatever affects him morally whether it be mixed with physical disease or not. The *unclean* spirit, the spirit of despair which drives a man into the tombs, and makes him cry, and cut himself with stones, and become a terror to his fellows, who cannot bind him, no not with chains, is the most essential and inward tyrant. Christ in asserting lordship over him, in bidding him come out of the man, proclaims that every thing which is unhealthy, diseased, corrupt,

whether it affects body or mind, or both in their mysterious unity, is not from above, but from beneath, is not according to the original order and constitution of the universe, has not come from God, but has come from rebellion against God ; is therefore to be redressed and abolished by the Holy One of God, the Son of God, who comes to preach and to establish the Kingdom of God.

Instead therefore of dwelling upon the other miracles with great earnestness, as the only satisfactory evidences of our Lord's mission, and endeavoring to pass over the stories of the casting out of devils as perplexities to be avoided, we shall, if we follow the Evangelists, seek in these for the general law and principle of the miracles, considering that they explain, more than any of the others, the nature of His operations and the end of his coming. At all events, the Evangelists, whatever others they may omit, or report differently, all agree in fixing our attention upon these, and in using language which continually suggests their relation to the rest. All three, though with some diversity of circumstances, report the cure of the man or the men among the tombs, as if it seemed to them the most characteristic and remarkable. All three speak, St. Matthew more than once, of the way in which the Pharisees explained these miracles, " He casteth out devils by the Prince of the devils." All record His argument in answer to that charge, " A house divided against itself cannot stand." All record these words, two of them in direct connection with this charge, " Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men ; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven : " words which even without St. Mark's divine explanation, " because they said he had an *unclean* spirit," would lead us naturally to the conclusion, that their sin consisted, not in denying the power of Christ, but in calling good evil, and evil good ; a state of mind implying a hatred of God's character and essence. All the Evangelists again agree in attributing to our Lord these words, which are so utterly perplexing and baffling to any one who regards the signs and powers which Christ exhibited merely

as startling portents, "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore shall they be your judges." In what possible senses could their sons be their judges? Was the power with which they wrought then like His power? If he was the true King of the world, all power which had ever been exerted was His power; He was come to show from whence such power was derived; and therefore if His power was evil, all the power which was ever exerted by any Jewish physician for the healing of diseases, or the removal of madness, was evil also.

Lastly, all the Evangelists agree in connecting faith in the subject, with most, if not all, these acts of power. Now if the miracles were merely, or chiefly, evidences of a divine mission, unconnected with the nature and character of that mission, one would rather have expected that the displays would have been most startling and overwhelming where the unbelief was most obstinate. In most legendary records it is contrived so. The faith is the effect of the surprising spectacle; it is wrought in the most reluctant. Whereas if these signs and powers were but the tokens and manifestations of the presence of One who came to claim the human spirit as His subject, and to raise it out of subjection to other masters, we perceive at once that there is something more regal and more mysterious in an act which calls out the man himself into trust and hope, than in that which merely rectifies the energies of his body or even of his mind. Not only the limb is straightened, not only the issue of blood is stanched, but the person who wields the limb, through whose veins the blood flows, is called into existence and health by the voice of the life-giver.

These remarks cannot be new to any one; they are of worth only so far as they set in order thoughts with which we are all familiar. No reader of the Gospels has ever doubted that the graciousness or benignity of Christ's miracles was part of their very nature. That quality has been brought forward by writers on evidence with more labor and particularity than was at all needful; for the heart receives such impressions the more read-

ily, and the more deeply, if they are not forced upon it. The apparent exceptions in the curse upon the fig-tree, and the destruction of the swine, have been accounted for with painful ingenuity, as if our consciences required to be convinced that a moral lesson, which is to work for the cure of human beings, may be obtained by the death of a tree or an animal. What I desire is that we should follow out the conviction which such expressions imply, and should acknowledge that the Evangelists looked upon these miracles as methods by which the great Deliverer was revealing himself in that character, was actually breaking the fetters by which human bodies as well as spirits were bound. In that way all the other miracles which the Evangelists record will be felt, I think, to have their own wonderful suitableness in the divine economy, for the after as well as the immediate instruction of men, especially to emancipate them from their superstitions. For the disciples to learn that the winds and waves were subject to their Master, for the multitude to feel that it was He who gave them their bread, was as needful as that they should feel that He restored the decayed powers of the body and the soul. Jews required such a lesson, for they were as prone now, as in former days, to tremble before the powers of nature, and to think that man lived by bread alone, and not by the word of God. But what a lesson was also in reserve for the worshippers of Neptune, Ceres, Æsculapius! what a witness to them that the powers which they supposed were divided amidst different capricious deities, were really gathered up in the one Lord and Friend of man!

PUBLICANS AND PHARISEES. THE NEW AND OLD GARMENT.

All the three Evangelists give the following narrative nearly in the same order, the name of Matthew in one being exchanged for that of Levi in the two others: "And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He said unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed Him. And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat

in the house, behold many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto His disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, He said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye, and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Then came to Him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast. No man putteth a piece of new cloth into an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles, else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish. But they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved." I may seem to be joining together two passages which have no direct relation to each other. But I am endeavoring to follow the Evangelists strictly; and where I find them all agreeing in the same order, I take it for granted that they felt the connection in the parts of their story, and wished to make us feel it. I think the minds of their simplest readers have responded to their intention. They have perceived that the question of John's disciples naturally rose out of our Lord's answer to the Pharisees, and that His similitudes of the new and old garments, and of the new and old bottles, were intended to explain a very deep ground for the difference between the position of His disciples and that of the disciples of the Pharisees or of John.

I. In the call of Levi, or Matthew, we discover at once the same assertion of a power over the will of the person spoken to, which was indicated in the call of Andrew and Simon, James and John. The words used do not in the least answer to our notion of a disciple attaching himself to a master, from some prefer-

ence; they convey, in the plainest manner, the idea of One speaking who had authority,—an authority which the conscience and heart recognized, though there was nothing in the outward appearance to support it.

II. But Matthew is not a fisherman; he is a rich tax-gatherer. As soon as he has obeyed the call, he gathers about him men of his own class, and invites his Master to eat with them. The members of this class had not merely a bad reputation. A number of them must have been extortioners; and the general dislike felt for them must have thrown them into the company of people deserving to be called sinners. To suppose that Matthew's company consisted merely of persons who had acquired that name through the prejudice of the Pharisees, is to twist the letter of the Gospel, and I conceive still more entirely to set aside its meaning. Now the Pharisees do not complain of our Lord for showing kindness or condescension to these wrong-doers, but for mixing with them as if they were friends, for eating and drinking with them. Did not the analogy of the Law justify them in doing so? Was it not a part of righteousness to avoid the contact of impurity? The Evangelist does not suggest any answer to these questions. He over-reaches them all with the words, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that be sick." If he looked upon his Master as the King of Men, who had come to restore an order which had been violated, such language was natural. If he believed that in Him dwelt that righteousness which all the precepts of the Law were trying to set forth, and that He was come to establish that righteousness in the hearts of those who had gone furthest astray from it, the proverb had a most true and obvious application. If, in other words, he felt that the Kingdom of our Lord was that kingdom over men which had been lying beneath all legal rules and ordinances, and which was to assert its own power, by fulfilling their purpose, even when it seemed most to dispense with them, one can feel how consistent this story is with all that has gone before. Upon any other view of the case it would seem as if the Pharisees' objection was unrefuted.

III. But if this explanation is adopted, the difficulty of John's disciples, though a very different one from that of the Pharisees, admitted of a similar solution. John's disciples might remember that their master had gained a more ready hearing from publicans and sinners than from scribes and Pharisees. They could not forget the phrase, "generation of vipers," which they had heard applied to those of the last class who came to his baptism. But then was not his most obvious characteristic, self-restraint, indifference to the good things of the flesh? Was not this the characteristic which he would especially have wished his disciples to imitate, even though in imitating it they might adopt the rules and practices of the Pharisees? The eating and drinking of the new Teacher, was it not directly at variance with this lesson and these habits? It was not so much the character of the company which startled them, as the fact that a Teacher of righteousness should lead his followers into places of entertainment at all. Why was not fasting as much to be the sign of them as of the schools which had preceded them? The first answer is, "The bridegroom is with them." A strange expression surely for the teacher of a school to use, one altogether perplexing and beyond the circle of the associations which such a character suggests. Yet not a novel association to those who had read the forty-fifth Psalm, to those who had heard of a King greatly delighting in the beauty of his affianced Bride, of his riding on because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness, of her forsaking her father's house that she might dwell with him. I do not now examine into the force of these expressions. I merely say that the effect of the phraseology upon the mind of a Jew would inevitably be to connect the person who applied it to himself with mysterious ideas of royalty and divinity. The disciples could not fast because they had attained the end for which the fasting was ordained, the apprehension and discovery of the Lord and Ruler of their spirits. There would come a time when there should be a sense of being deprived of that object, and then would they fast in those days.

But the idea is much more fully brought out in the second part

of the answer. No one, I believe, has ever doubted that the old garment and the old bottles referred to the institutions of the ancient economy ; the new garment and the new bottles, to those which Christ would establish. Every one has seen that in some way or other our Lord meant to say, that it would be mischievous merely to re-enact the forms and customs which had belonged to the past, until the substance and the life, of which customs and forms are the outside, had been brought out and revealed. But surely if His Kingdom was not the everlasting Kingdom, which all Jewish institutions had been imperfectly exhibiting, these comparisons, and the argument which is founded upon them, would not hold good. He would be substituting new bottles for the old, not expressing the wine which was to fill the bottles. No more beautiful illustration could be conceived of the assertion that the Kingdom of God, when it had once unfolded itself, would work out a drapery fitted for itself, and that it would not merely make use of that drapery which belonged to it when it was yet undeveloped. But if that were not the intention of the Evangelists, one must feel that they used illustrations, apparently of the most simple and natural kind, with most artificial and unreal signification.

THE APPOINTMENT OF THE APOSTLES.

" And when He had called unto Him his twelve disciples, He gave them power over unclean spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." Then follow the names of the Apostles. " These twelve Jesus sent forth and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not ; but go rather unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils : freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey ; neither two coats, neither shoes nor yet staves : for the workman is worthy

of his meat. And into whatsoever city or house ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house salute it, and if the house be worthy, let your peace come on it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet." This passage differs in a few particulars from those which correspond to it in St. Mark and St. Luke. The calling of the Apostles is separated by both of them from their designation to their work. Our Lord's commands to them are much more minute and detailed in the tenth chapter of St. Matthew than in the sixth of St. Mark and in the ninth of St. Luke. Some of them are transferred by St. Luke to the seventy disciples. But the words which I have quoted, with the exception of those respecting the Gentiles and the Samaritans, belong to all three. I do not know that it is necessary to dwell on the importance which the Evangelists evidently attach to this commission. Every one feels it and admits it. It would be the greatest waste of time to argue or to prove that our Lord speaks to His Apostles constantly as the heralds of a Kingdom, as men entrusted with spiritual powers, as men who are to be the founders of a society, as men whose immediate task was to be the precursors of infinitely higher tasks which were to be committed to them hereafter. "All this, it will be said, is just what we might have expected; it is an *ex post facto* list of directions. The Evangelists wrote with the experience of what the Apostles had done, they antedated events which they themselves had possibly witnessed, or which were handed down to them." What I wish to remark is simply, that this narrative is in exact keeping with all that has gone before. John the Baptist came announcing that a Kingdom was at hand. Our Lord preached, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand;" the twelve were sent forth with the same message. The Kingdom which John announced was evidently a Kingdom over the spirit of man. He said that the person who came after him would baptize with the Spirit. All the acts by which Christ is said to

have testified of His Kingdom, were acts of spiritual power, acts of dominion over spirits. The same powers are said to be committed to the Apostles for the same purpose. Every thing certainly in the tone of thought, in the deliberate, and in the accidental expressions of the Evangelists, where they agree, and where they vary, intimate a settled persuasion in their minds, that they are describing the acts of a Ruler, of One who had ruled in times past, and would give mightier evidence of His rule in the times to come, who had called out the twelve tribes to be His national witnesses, who was now preparing men who should at once represent those tribes, and should carry out the purpose for which they were chosen, to all the families of the earth. There is no faltering in their statements on this subject, no occasional forgetfulness of this idea, and substitution of another; it is the assumption that pervades the whole narrative; it is not forced on our attention anywhere, it makes itself felt everywhere.

THE SABBATH-DAY.

"At that time Jesus went on the sabbath-day through the corn; and His disciples were an hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto Him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath-day. But He said unto them, Have ye not read what David did when he was an hungered, and they that were with him, how he entered into the House of God, and did eat the shew-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? Or have ye not read in the Law, how that on the sabbath-days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you, That in this place is One greater than the temple. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the sabbath-day.... And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered, and they asked Him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath-days? that they

might accuse Him. And He said unto them, What man shall there be among you, which shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath-days." The story of the corn-fields, and that of the man with the withered hand, occur in all the three Evangelists. Each one dwells with special emphasis on this and the other complaints of the Pharisees respecting our Lord's neglect of the sabbath-day. All speak of it as the first great provocation which led them to hold a council against Him that they might destroy Him. St. Mark says this was the occasion on which He looked round on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts. St. Luke recurs again and again to the subject. The first narrative is in his fourth chapter, the next in the thirteenth, the third in the fourteenth. Considering the brevity of the Evangelical histories, it is surprising how much space is devoted to this subject, and how much the writers seem to have felt that it was necessary to the illustration of our Lord's life. But why should this be so? The sabbath was undoubtedly one of the most memorable Jewish institutions. Supposing there was a pharisaical excess of extravagance in the observation of it, might we not have expected a great teacher to have pointed out the equal or greater danger of the opposite tendency to which the Sadducees probably were liable? This was no case of a tradition of the elders; it was a positive commandment, like that of honoring father and mother. And yet the whole weight of the example and authority of Jesus seems thrown into the scale of permission and toleration, which we might suppose would be already the heaviest.

"The Son of Man," says St. Matthew, "is Lord also of the sabbath-day." "The sabbath was made for man," says St. Mark, "not man for the sabbath; therefore the Son of Man is Lord of the sabbath." St. Luke repeats the last words, connecting them directly with the act of David in eating the shew-bread. Here we have an explanation supplied by the Evangelists themselves, of the importance which they attach to these dialogues. He

who had instituted the sabbath-day, He of whom it had testified, was come to assert His own dominion over it, to declare what he had meant by it. That lordship was denied by the Pharisees, that meaning was wholly set aside. It was not an error of excess. It was a dreadful, fatal contradiction of the whole nature and essence of this commandment, and of all the commandments. They had no feeling that the sabbath was meant for man; how could they enter into the force of the words, "Thou shalt rest, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the stranger that is within thy gates?" What cared the Pharisee for the man-servant, or the maid-servant, or the stranger? What they cared for was the day, abstractedly, nakedly, divested of all its life and associations. To it the man-servant, the maid-servant, the stranger, were to be sacrificed. Then how could they look upon the Son of Man, who had come as the King and Deliverer of man-servants, and maid-servants, and strangers, as the Lord of this day? How could they welcome such a Person at all, coming with such an object, while their whole spirits were concentrated in the mere husk of the institution? I say the husk, not the letter; for they could not read the letter. The letter witnessed against them; it spoke of the relation between man and God, of God sharing man's labor, and of man sharing God's rest. It proclaimed the very truth which the Pharisees were denying when they called Christ a blasphemer. All the latent inhumanity, as well as the real Atheism of the Pharisee, lay wrapt in his feelings about the sabbath-day. Was it wonderful that he should hold a council against Christ for the acts and words which brought these feelings to light? Was it wonderful that the holiest and divinest anger should have been awakened by the awful contradiction of men turning the commandment of God into a practical denial of Him? But all this profound morality is inexplicable, all this wonderful assertion of the principle which the Pharisees were undermining is reduced to nothing, if the Gospels were not, as they pretend to be, primarily and throughout, the history of a Son of God, and a King of Men.

THE PARABLES.

Nearly the whole of the thirteenth Chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel is devoted to our Lord's parables. Many others occur in the after chapters of his Gospel; St. Mark records but few. There is nothing in which St. Luke is so characteristically distinguished from both the other Evangelists, as in his selection of parables. There are three which are common to all these Gospels, the parable of the Sower, the parable of the Mustard-seed, and the parable of the Lord of the vineyard and the husbandmen.

I propose to consider each of them, with as much of the context as all the Evangelists have thought needful for their elucidation.

I. The Sower is treated in every Gospel as a specimen of this mode of teaching. The explanation of it is connected in all with the reason for speaking in parables. It deserves, therefore, very especial attention. We may hope to learn from it whether the teaching of our Lord confirms or weakens the conclusion which we have drawn from His Baptism, His temptation, His miracles, His arguments with opponents. We may, perhaps, begin our enquiry with our Lord's answer to the disciples' question, which was suggested by the parable of the sower, "Why speakest Thou unto them in parables? He answered and said, Because unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given."

These words at once connect the parables with the phrase which has already encountered us so often, and which thus far has borne a definite and uniform signification. Only we have here the word "mysteries" for the first time associated with the word "kingdom." How associated? Were not the Apostles then to preach the kingdom of God? Was the information which their Master communicated to them respecting it esoteric, intended for their own use, or for that of a set of initiated dis-

ciples whom they should gather round them? If this were so, it would be difficult indeed to reconcile the use of parables with the other part of these records, a difficulty which would not be the least diminished by attributing any amount of imposition and self-glorification to the minds of the Evangelists. Everywhere else they are endeavoring to set forth their Master in contrast with the learned doctors of the Jewish schools, as the Teacher of the poor and the ignorant. Here they would be gratuitously admitting that they had received a peculiar and special instruction, which at the same moment they were with ludicrous simplicity divulging. But when we look at the discourse itself, we find it still more difficult to maintain this view of the case. The interpretation of the parable of the Sower was evidently that which they were *by all possible means* to make their hearers acquainted with. They were instructed themselves in the hinderances which prevented the Word from taking root and bringing forth fruit, on purpose that they might warn others of those hinderances. I speak to them in parables, because they *cannot* receive the lesson I wish to impart in any other way. The thing is hidden from them, and this my discourse will tell you why it is hidden from them, where the veil is, how, and by whom it has been drawn. Their own inner life was concealed from the multitude, because their hearts had waxed gross and their ears were dull of hearing. The secret operations which were going on there were just those which they had no perception of. The government which was exercised over themselves, over their own hearts and spirits, could only be made known to them through outward things with which their eyes were conversant. Even these they observed very imperfectly, often scarcely at all. It was a discovery, a revelation, to remind them of the secret processes by which the seed was transformed into the stalk, and the ear, and the full corn in the ear. The world of nature was to them almost as is a landscape to a blind man's eye; still they could not be quite unconscious of facts with which they were every day occupied. They might be awakened to an observation of these; they might be led to perceive an order in the things

about them, in the works of nature and of man, with which they were most familiar ; thence they might be led to discover the traces of an order and dominion nearer to themselves, one working continually for their discipline and deliverance.

Those, on the other hand, who were feeling, however confusedly, after the light and knowledge which most nearly concerned themselves, who cared less for the earth, and its seeds, and its fruits than to be set free from their ignorance, than to be made right and true within, the hearts which craved for guidance and sought in their weariness for a resting place and a home, the children who were crying for a Father, had an immediate hold upon the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven ; to them it was given to know them : the others saw them projected outwardly in the sensible world.

Some such view as this, I think, would be generally taken of this language. I am not the least desirous to suggest a novel one, but merely to show how exactly such a view accords with, and carries out the idea of a Kingdom which has the first and highest sphere of its operations in man's inner being, but which extends into every part of his life, through the whole of society, thence through the whole intellectual and sentient universe. If we supposed the actual King of men come to make manifest the nature of his government to them, to show them what rule he had been exercising over them, and for what ends, how it was thwarted, why they were unaware of its presence ; if we supposed that King of Men to be also the King of nature, the Creator and Lord of the world in which men is dwelling, if we supposed Him to have made that world especially for the habitation of man, to have placed him in the centre of it, to have ordered it according to laws which could only perfectly exhibit themselves when they bore upon his character and his acts, we should certainly feel why the parable of the Sower must be the key to all parables, why it is said to set forth a mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven, why it sets forth at the same time a mystery of the kingdom of earth, why it belongs to the life of each individual man, why it has the closest relation to the history of the race.

That the Son of Man deposits his word in a voluntary being who can prevent it from producing its regular and natural effects, this is the direct, obvious doctrine of the parable. The corresponding fact in the kingdom of nature is that a person puts a seed into the ground which certain qualities in the ground may make unfruitful. In each case we are reminded that productiveness is the law, that unproductiveness is the anomaly, the result of some perversity, and yet of a perversity which is most likely to appear, which it requires a power not existing in the human or in the natural subject to remove. Each is intended to receive that power, to submit to it; then all its latent capacities are discovered and unfolded; then the results become in their due season visible. In each case the processes are secret and orderly; in each case the disappointment arises from the productive power not penetrating deeply enough into the ground; in each case that which ultimately appears upon the surface is to the eye quite different from that which was the cause of it. Dwell upon these great lines and landmarks of the discourse, try to harmonize them in your mind, and you arrive, I conceive, at such a sense of the reality of the distinction and of the resemblance of the two great spheres which compose our universe, as no definitions or philosophical arrangement can give. But you feel at the same time that these spheres must be under the authority and direction of a Person, that the phrase "Kingdom" has a literal and not a metaphorical application to them, that you could not choose any other which would not be a feeble and awkward exchange for it.

II. I spoke of the parable of the Sower as relating to the life of the race as well as to the life of the individual. If it is the history of the operation of the Divine Will upon human wills, we cannot limit it to a number of particular experiences. The history of man must be contained in it. Nevertheless I can quite acquiesce in the common feeling that this parable less obviously concerns the movements and growth of human society than certain others. I can readily admit the parable of the Mustard-seed to be, as it is commonly said to be, a prophecy of the future

unfolding of the Church collectively. But then I must ask you to observe that the character of this unfolding is essentially the same with that which has been described in the former case. The mustard-tree cannot have been the greatest or stateliest of the trees of the forest. Its greatness and stateliness are not the subject of the parable. The subject is clearly the growth, first of a herb, then of a tree, out of the most insignificant of all seeds. Underground processes are here also implied.' The Apostles had already heard the parable of the Sower, their minds had taken in to some extent the spirit and purport of it. They would needs apply the interpretation of it here also; they would suppose that the mustard-seed, like that which brought forth the corn, was sown and watched by a Divine husbandman, they would conclude that it was planted in human spirits, that these were by some process brought into such unity and fellowship that they could be represented by one great tree with many branches. Of course I do not suppose any elaborate process of reasoning to have gone on in the minds of the Galilæan fisherman. It was the beauty of this scheme of instruction that such processes were not needful: the natural image united to the experience of the spirit within supplied the place of them. The Divine Teacher had already written His lessons upon the sensible world; He had only to open the eyes of His Disciples to read them there. The one tree with its different branches, and the fowls of the air at last lodging in them, though it was only an imperfect representation of spiritual unity and of all the diverse and living forms in which it exhibits itself, was still a far closer approximation to that reality than any discussions about unity in the schools could possibly give birth to. The image bore witness that no artificial or deliberate combination of different persons and wills, just as no combination of leaves and branches, could produce the oneness; that it must have a root underneath the soil, that an original unity must be the ground of the diversity, not the result of it. The Kingdom of Heaven then in the parable of the Mustard-seed presents itself to us under a new aspect, but as preserving the same essential characteristic. There is

One who is ruling, One in whom it consists, One from whose secret life it receives all its different energies.

III. Still it will be observed that one element in the Gospel-narratives seems to be wanting in both these parables. It is affirmed that the sower of the seed is the Son of Man; the growth of the mustard-seed is the growth of a kingdom; a king is implied in it. But is this Son of Man, this King of men, the Son of God? Can we say that such a person is declared to be the source whence all the agencies and instruments are derived, which are at work in human society and in the world of nature? I said there was a third parable which is common to the three Evangelists. Each one of them dwells upon it very emphatically, as that parable which told most directly upon the consciences of the chief priests and scribes, which they felt was spoken against them, and which stirred them up to seek for an immediate revenge. A vineyard, it is said, was let to husbandmen; the owner of it sent servant after servant to demand the fruits; one was beaten, another stoned. "Last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus said unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

This passage, I think you will perceive, is in very striking accordance with all we have considered previously. (1) A Son is represented coming forth after a succession of servants, but it is clearly intimated that the Son was before the servants. The first agent in all the works of God declared himself last. That power was revealed to whom all the rest were subordinate, and

from whom they were derived. (2) He came, like all who had been before, to seek the fruits of the vineyard, or, as our Lord Himself interprets it, to see whether those to whom the Kingdom of God had been committed were worthy of such a trust. (3) The consummate act of rebellion arose from a wish to claim the inheritance. The husbandmen would not acknowledge the Son because they would not acknowledge a Father. They wished to appropriate as their own that which belonged to Him, which they could only hold, as the son held it, by faith in Him, by renouncing themselves. (4) Thus this parable, just like the preaching of John, like our Lord's own preaching, like His other discourses, like His miracles, is looking forward to a judgment which was at hand, which would declare that the axe was laid to the root of the tree, and that since it did not bear good fruit, it would be hewn down and cast into the fire. The more then we look into these parables, those which belong expressly to the first three Gospels, and are wanting in the fourth, the more the truth seems brought home to us, that it cannot have been the first object of these Evangelists to exhibit to us a human teacher, or a set of maxims and examples which he presented ; that it must have been their first object to declare a King of men and a Son of God, who came to show forth the kingdom which was implied in the Jewish kingdom, and to overthrow the one by establishing the other.

HEROD HEARING OF CHRIST.

"At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, and said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist ; he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him." This announcement with some variations occurs in all the three Evangelists. In the first two the narrative of John's death is appended to it. I introduce it because I do not wish to pass over any passage which is common to them, even if it seems insignificant. I do not think this is insignificant, especially when it is connected with a passage which we shall

meet with presently, and with some which will be considered afterwards in the fourth Gospel. The question of the relation between our Lord and John the Baptist bears in a very remarkable manner upon the history of early Christian opinions, and has a close reference to the subject with which we are occupied. I shall say no more of it in this place, except that the desire of Herod to connect Christ with John, or with some old Prophet, indicates the restless fear which characterized all his family, lest the teacher should turn out to be a king. They would gladly indulge the people in any, even the highest fancy respecting a favorite instructor, to escape that perilous alternative.

THE SIGN FROM HEAVEN.

"The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired Him that He would show them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather; for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day; for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed." In the eighth chapter of St. Mark, at the 11th verse, we have this account of the same transaction: "And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with Him, seeking of Him a sign from heaven, tempting Him. And He sighed deeply in His spirit, and said, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? Verily I say unto you, there shall no sign be given unto this generation." The following passage in the eleventh chapter of St. Luke, at the 29th verse, evidently corresponds to these two: "And when the people were gathered thick together, He began to say, This is an evil generation; they seek a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall the Son of Man be to this generation." This subject of

signs occurs so often, and is dwelt upon so emphatically by the Evangelists, that it requires a serious consideration. The Pharisees evidently thought that they were asking for some proof altogether different from any our Lord had furnished them with. To heal the sick, to cast out devils, was not in their minds at all an adequate attestation of His power. It proved, no doubt, that he had *some* power, but was it a power from *heaven?* To establish that fact there must be some visible token in the *heavens* showing that He had come from thence, and derived His power from thence. Here is the test, the *experimentum crucis* by which we discover what their notion of heaven was. However their rabbis might distinguish between the first, second, and third heaven, all had really the same sensuous character. However they might denounce the heathen idolatry, they were worshipping a cloud-compeller, a mere God of nature, as much as any Greek was. It was a visible sign in a visible heaven that they wanted. Such, and such only, was recognized by them as a sign from God. Must not He who came preaching the Kingdom of heaven, the Kingdom of His Father, have sighed deeply when the people who were chosen out of all lands to witness of the true God, gave this proof that they had lost the power of acknowledging any God but a God of sense. How exactly do His words convey the meaning of this sigh, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign;" a generation utterly sensualized, self-seeking, without the power of looking upon heaven, except as a shadow cast from the earth, which seemed to them alone real and substantial! How exactly, too, do the words, "No sign shall be given them but the sign of Jonas the prophet," correspond to all that we have found in the preaching of the Baptist, and in the preaching of Jesus himself. Whatever else may be implied in the sign of Jonas, the first and simplest idea of it unquestionably is that which is conveyed in the passages I have quoted, that which St. Matthew and St. Luke are agreed in putting forward most prominently, that which explains the "no sign" of St. Mark; for if the only sign given was that of Jonas, no sign would be given in the sense in which the Pharisees de-

sired one. Jonas came preaching repentance to the Ninevites, he called to them to turn from their evil ways, else the city which had stood for generations would be destroyed. That proved him to be a prophet from heaven. The people owned him because he spoke to their consciences, because he discovered to them their evil. The scribes and Pharisees did not acknowledge *this* sign of a prophet. The other would assuredly come to them in due time. Signs there would be in heaven and earth that the city of David was to be left desolate, and an astonishment and a hissing to all people of the earth. So important is this discourse respecting signs in illustrating the purpose of the three Evangelists, and in showing how far they were the vulgar materialists which the wise men of this day suppose them to have been.

THE LEAVEN OF THE SECTS.

"Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." St. Mark states the injunction somewhat differently, chap. ix. ver. 15, "And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the leaven of Herod." St. Luke, chap. xii. ver. 1, limits it to one of these sects, "He began to say unto His disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." In St. Matthew and St. Mark the admonition is connected with the disciples forgetting to take bread. The disciples fancied that He was afraid of poison. In St. Luke the words are parts of a general discourse. The reason which enforces them is, "for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known."

The word "leaven" might naturally suggest a suspicion to the disciples which perhaps was not wholly unjustified by what they knew of the practices of these sects, and of their special malice against Jesus. Still the use of this word in their own Scriptures, interpreted by the Paschal feast, if they had entered into the meaning and spirit of their Master's teaching, would have led them to feel that this was not the signification of leaven

which He was most likely to intend. He rebukes them directly for not trusting Him to give them such bread as was needful and healthful for them, after the evidences they had had of His power; He rebukes them implicitly for seeing nothing according to its inward meaning, every thing in its coarse and carnal application. And hereby He seems also to explain more distinctly what that mixture was which Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians, all alike introduced into their doctrine, though they differed so greatly among themselves, though technically and dogmatically they were opposed to each other. The leaven of the Pharisees was especially, as St. Luke says, hypocrisy. As the ordinary bread was leavened, and yet leaven is always presumed to make it less pure,—to be that which gives the other elements consistency, but in some sense by the destruction of their proper qualities,—so the Pharisee mixed that which is earthly with that which is heavenly, till the whole substance was changed. God's Law and Covenant were meant to separate a man from his evil nature, to bring him under a new power and principle. The Pharisee incorporated the Law and the Covenant with the evil nature; the motives, influences, tendencies of that nature were used to bind together the maxims of the Divine Law, to make it operative. Thus his whole life, outwardly consistent and coherent, became a great practical contradiction. He was an actor. A mask made in imitation of the real, living, divine Form, supplied its place. His inward being perished more every day; for that which should have kept it alive was itself turned into an instrument of its destruction. To the Pharisee the words especially applied, "That which is hidden shall be known, that which is covered shall be revealed." The secret ground of the heart, the inner man, which was becoming more and more unknown unto itself, which was buried under a mass of outward practices and formalities, which was concealed by the darkness of fleshly desires and religious self-deceits, would come forth into the light of day. The man would stand forth discovered to himself, discovered also by his open evil acts to the world. On the other hand, there would be a clear, broad distinction between

the Divine bread which he had defiled, and the leaven which he had mixed with it. All this applied most characteristically to the Pharisee. He was emphatically *the* hypocrite. Divine spiritual principles were not recognized, and were therefore not perverted in the same way, or to the same degree, by any other sect as they were by him. But the Sadducee and the Herodian were also, each in his own manner, leavening the divine food which had been given them for the nourishment of themselves and of the whole people of Israel. The one by the maxims of mere earthly and prudential morality, the other by the rules and maxims of state-expediency, were transforming the righteousness of God into a human system, utterly ineffectual for the guidance of man, ministering to his pride, favorable to dishonesty. They also were hypocrites, though not religious hypocrites, like the Pharisee. Each had to keep up a name and a character; the Sadducee for wisdom and superiority to vulgar prejudices, the Herodian for political sagacity, and for desire to preserve Jewish customs and religion along with subjection to the Cæsars. Each was trying to blend contradictions, to bring the traditions of their forefathers into harmony with their own partial, corrupt, grovelling objects. Of this leaven then the disciples had to beware. It did not belong exclusively to one sect or form of opinion or another. It was sure to debase all persons who were not taking pains to exclude it. No notions or practices were a protection against it. They could only be saved from it by remembering that they had a Lawgiver and King always with them, who was seeking to separate the chaff from the wheat, that in them which desired right and truth from that which was cleaving to earth and nature, the divine seed from the evil seed which an enemy had sown in their hearts.

PETER'S CONFESSION.

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, whom do men say that I the Son of Man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the

Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Thus far the accounts of all the three Evangelists are very nearly the same. The answer in St. Mark ix. 29, is simply, "Thou art the Christ;" in Luke ix. 20, "Thou art the Christ of God." All the three agree in saying, "Then charged He His disciples that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ."

There can be no question in any one's mind as to the importance which each of the Evangelists attaches to this narrative, nor, I think, is there much difference of opinion as to the main object and interpretation of it. St. Peter, so all the Gospels intimate, St. Matthew only with more clearness than the rest, had by some means arrived at a conviction which the people generally, even those who had the highest notion of Jesus, did not entertain. They could believe that He was a prophet, even a miraculous person, the apparition of one who had been long dead, or John the Baptist returned from the grave with new powers. But there was something which the did not admit. The idea of a Son of God, of the Christ of God, had not dawned upon them. They could not say He is this. And the narrative goes on to say, they were not to be told that He was this. The discovery was one which the Apostles were not to publish; He straightly charged them that they should not: Why was this? Was it not the very purpose of John the Baptist's coming to declare the Christ? Was it not the object of the miracles, the parables, the life of Jesus? Assuredly; to declare the King who was ruling *invisibly* over men's hearts and spirits. And therefore while He was visibly among them, He was not to be *proclaimed* as the Christ. The whole power and mystery of the words would have been lost in such an announcement. In acts of healing love, in the Gospel to the poor, in his most trifling acts, in His countenance, the truth came forth as truth. It would have been turned outwards, it would have been made a falsehood by the carnal hearts to which it was addressed, if it

had taken the form of a proposition. It was to take that form hereafter; a time would come when this would be the main topic of the preacher, "Jesus is the Christ." Now he was to say, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand; now he was to make the character and nature of this kingdom felt. If he did more it would be the kingdom of a Herod or a Cæsar, not of a Christ, that he would be setting up. Every one will perceive how consistent the words of St. Matthew, "Flesh and blood have not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven," are with this view of the case; how equally consistent the reproof, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men," when the same Peter who made the confession showed that it was still impossible for him to reconcile the King with the sufferer. I shall not, of course, go into the memorable words about the rock, because they constitute one of the peculiarities of St. Matthew. I shall not even allude any further to the censure of the Apostle who had just received so high a benediction, because St. Luke does not speak of it. So much it was right to say on the subject, because the very next passage which is common to all the Evangelists, and is connected by them all with the question at Cæsarea Philippi, contains the essence and spirit of the rebuke. I hope I have shown, without introducing the least novelty into the explanation of the passage, that it proves the first three Evangelists to have been possessed by the feeling that the Kingdom of which they spoke was, in the highest sense, a spiritual one; that they never thought of Jesus as other than the Son of God.

TAKING UP THE CROSS.

"Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own

soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with his angels, and then shall He reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom." The agreement of the three Evangelists is clearer in this passage than in almost any other. The only important differences are, that in Matthew Jesus speaks to His disciples, that in St. Mark He calls the people unto Him with His disciples also, and that in St. Luke "He speaks to them all;" the antecedent being apparently disciples; and that St. Mark and St. Luke introduce here the important words, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed;" expressions which had already occurred in a somewhat varying form in the 10th Chapter of St. Matthew.

Though no passage is more frequently quoted than this, as if it were a solitary maxim or proverb, its meaning can hardly be ascertained, I think, if we forget the position which it occupies in all the Evangelists between the confession of Peter and the Transfiguration. There is something very emphatic in the manner in which the title, Son of *Man*, is introduced in each Gospel, when it is viewed in connection with the declaration, "Thou art the Son of *God*." It appears to exhibit, more clearly than any language could, the very nature and essence of our Lord's own self-denial, and therefore to point out that which He is demanding of His followers. He receives His Apostle's confession, adopts it as true, rejoices that he has made it; but He takes that very moment to show that the glory of the Son of God consists in renunciation of all self-subsisting greatness, in choosing to have nothing of his own, in sharing the sufferings and the death of man. The harmony of this passage with the history of the Temptation, and the way in which it illustrates its relation to the Baptism, will, I think, commend itself to the conscience of every one. But the point to which I would chiefly draw your attention is, the difference between the morality of the passage

when it is thus looked at, or when it is considered as an independent maxim, enjoining Christ's disciples to take care of their souls, and not to consider any thing so precious as they are. That the effect of obeying our Lord's words in their true and fullest sense is, that the soul is saved, that the effect of forgetting them is, that the soul is lost, no one who reverences Him can venture to deny. But we cannot overlook his express language in order to bring out the result of it more quickly according to a notion of ours. We are told in this very passage, that he who saveth his soul shall lose it. I do not say in what way we are to construe ψυχὴ ; but I do say that as it is construed in one part of the paragraph so it must be in another. We cannot make it animal life where our Lord speaks of losing it, and something wholly different from animal life, something opposite to it, where He speaks of saving it. In some sense or other, He tells us that every thing which belongs to us, animal life, intellectual life, spiritual life, our own very selves, are to be given up and lost, if we would have them saved, or if we would be His disciples. To make this passage the ground for continual exhortations to men, simply and nakedly to be seeking after the security of their souls, must involve a perilous contradiction, must put us in hazard of setting at nought the letter as well as the spirit of the Divine command. Whereas, if the whole context is considered, if Christ, the King of men and the Son of God, is really regarded as the great self-denier, not because these glories did not belong to Him, but because they did, and because He could only assert them and set them forth as they were by glorifying His Father and giving up Himself, the self-denial of his disciples is seen to consist likewise in the giving up of every thing which is individually theirs, the acknowledgment of it as altogether their Lord's, as realized, possessed, enjoyed only in Him.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them. And his face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and, behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only." However commentators may have striven to arrange the Gospels according to some theory of passovers, and of our Lord's journeyings to and from Galilee, it has been impossible for them not to perceive that the event recorded in these verses, though of so strictly a supernatural kind, is one of the great landmarks in the writings of the three Evangelists, one of those events which all felt themselves bound to record; and which they looked upon, not as standing out of the history, but as explaining what goes before and what follows it. No wonder the Straussian should seize such an event as this, as demonstrating the mixture of mythical with ordinary earthly narrative. Upon the hypothesis with which he starts, it must be at once thrown aside as having nothing whatever to do with the life of Jesus of Nazareth, as being only one of the superb inventions in which the human spirit has expressed its sense of its own dignity, has glorified and deified itself. Only this question will occur to any one who has followed me through the inquiry on which I have entered, whether every single narrative which we have considered hitherto does not rest upon the same principle as this

one, and must not stand or fall with it. And this further question will occur to those who study the narrative itself, without any prepossession in favor of the Straussian scheme or of mine, whether the human spirit ever found out so strange a method of expressing its veneration either for itself, or for a favorite hero, as that which comes forth in these verses. No pomp of words in one Gospel or in the other, no attempt to excite the reader's astonishment by the starts of the writer; the language orderly, calm, simple to nakedness, yet such a description as the highest painters have felt embodied an awe and reverence which they might dare with a trembling pencil to express through their art; a vision preceded by words speaking of humiliation and nothingness, followed by words and acts of the same import—a vision in its outward form transitory, almost momentary, leaving behind it only the words which were heard at the Baptism, "This is my beloved Son," with those others which betokened that His Word, which spake to the inward heart and spirit, was mightier, diviner than the countenance shining as the sun, than the garments shining as the light: yes, that it was the invisible, inward glory which produced that transformation of the bodily form which the eye could scarcely behold. If this passage were one of those exaggerated deviations from the ordinary story which the Straussian supposes, it is strange by what art the vulgar and blundering Galilæans, the earthly sense-ridden Hebrew, contrived to preserve so entirely the style of his common discourse, to abstain from all inflation and exaggeration; stranger still that he seems afraid to dwell upon this transcendant outward manifestation, eager to prove that the greatness of the Son of God could establish itself by higher proofs than these. But if we admit that the setting forth of the Son of God is the purpose of all these narratives, that He is declared throughout them all as possessing a power which, beginning from the inmost region, was meant to penetrate and pervade the most outward and sensible,—renewing and transforming the human form, and ultimately the whole earth with the heavenly life which was poured into it.—then the omission of a passage like this would be a sign

of weakness and incompleteness; the heart would ask for something which it did not find, the Gospels would not be truly and fully Gospels of the Kingdom of God.

THE EPILEPTIC BOY.

"And when they were come to the multitude, there came to Him a certain man, kneeling down to Him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son; for he is lunatick, and sore vexed; for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, Oh! faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? Bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him, and the child was cured from that very hour." The exquisite instinct of Raphael perceived at once the necessity of combining this event with the seemingly incongruous one of which we have just spoken. He felt that the unities of space and time were both to be sacrificed for the sake of the deeper and more mysterious unity which all the three Evangelists had perceived, and which had compelled them to exhibit the earthly crowd and faithless disciples at the bottom of the mount, as part of the same picture with the still and awful scene upon its summit. The painter, if he transgressed the formal rules of his art, will be admitted, I should conceive, to have done so in submission to a higher principle of art; not for the sake of a broad and glaring contrast, but that he might give a reality to our feeling of the Transfiguration, that he might connect it with ourselves, he made his daring experiment. All laws of art rest, I suppose, on some ground deeper than themselves, which they indicate, but cannot touch. Certainly the theological truth which this meeting of contraries embodies is one which belongs to the very heart of Christianity, one which words cannot express, which is never seen fully but in the life of Christ, which we can only apprehend, even in the faintest degree, when we acknowledge that the fellow-sufferer with man, the deliverer of man, is prima-

rily and in His inmost being the well-beloved Son of God. This illustration of the principle I am seeking to enforce is too remarkable to be passed over. But as I have already spoken of our Lord's miracles in general, I have no excuse for dwelling in detail upon this one, striking and memorable as the circumstances of it are.

PROPHECY OF THE PASSION.

With this narrative is connected another of our Lord's prophecies, of His death and resurrection, which is preserved by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and apparently referred by all to the same time. "And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall rise again. And they were exceeding sorry." The language of all the evangelists, St. Mark and St. Luke even more than of St. Matthew, leaves us no room for doubt, that the Transfiguration seemed to them the appointed prelude, not to a single discourse, but to a series of discourses on this topic; that from this time forth, in fact, it became the leading subject of our Lord's teaching when He was among His own disciples; that so they were prepared for His final entrance into Jerusalem. Any one who compares the short passages which refer to this time will have no doubt, I think, that, even for the chronology of the Gospels, they are the most important which we can find. I do not profess to throw any light upon that chronology, but I am persuaded that the light must come where commentators have looked for it least, from the portions of the narratives which have the most evidently supernatural and celestial character.

THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

"The same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said,

Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth Me." The parallel passage in St. Mark is at the 33d verse of the ninth chapter. There the occasion of the discourse is stated somewhat differently. "Being in the house He asked them, What was it that you disputed among yourselves by the way? And they held their peace; for by the way they had disputed among themselves which of them should be the greatest." St. Luke, ch. ix. ver. 46, follows St. Mark with a slight variation, "Then there arose a reasoning among them which of them should be the greatest; and Jesus perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child," etc. The discourse in St. Matthew beginning from the face of the little child, flows on for some time with many windings; it is terminated speedily in St. Mark and St. Luke by the words of St. John, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy Name, and we forbade him," etc. Allusions both to the dispute of the disciples and to the subject itself, occur, I need not say, often in the Evangelists—a very memorable one in St. Luke's account of the Paschal Supper. But the face of the child proves that these three narratives refer to the same conversation, even if all circumstances of time and place were not in accordance.

That the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, had been the proclamation of John, of our Lord, and of the disciples whom he sent forth. Every one would expect such an announcement to act powerfully upon the minds of those who had heard it, still more of those who had uttered it. The Kingdom of Heaven has been for a long while at hand, is it not now actually coming? The Transfiguration preceded by the words, "Verily I say unto you, there are some standing here who shall not taste of death till they see the Kingdom of God coming with power," must have mightily increased the expectation of its speedy appearance, the warnings which the Apostles found it so impossible to under-

stand respecting the rejection and death of their Master, would only in a slight degree allay it. Hence every one has perceived in the evangelical narratives indications of a growing impatience in the minds of the disciples to know when the promise should be fulfilled, and what their places, when the new reign commenced, should be. Nearly all, I say, have perceived this, and have perceived that the character of our Lord's discourses, especially when He set his face to go to Jerusalem, were directed especially to this feeling in the hearts of His followers. But the point specially deserving of notice is, that He never for a moment changes the language which He had before employed. He never intimates that it is not a Kingdom in the strict ordinary sense of the word, which He has come to set up. He only disabuses the minds of His Apostles of certain vulgar but perfectly natural notions respecting a kingdom, which they, in common with the majority of their countrymen, of Pharisees as much as Publicans, in common with the majority of men in every age and country, were cherishing. With the idea of a kingdom they connected the triumph of the few over the many, rivalship among those few, the ascendancy of one. All these have been no doubt the accidents of every earthly kingdom, but they had been the destructive accidents of it. No kingdom subsisted by the ambition of the few, by the weakness of the many, by the rivalship of the great among themselves, by the ultimate tyranny of the sagacious or fortunate chieftain. It subsisted by the power which it possessed of resisting these influences, that were always working to overthrow it, by the higher and nobler impulses and objects which stirred in the minds of even its selfish citizens, and led them to seek its prosperity even at the sacrifice of their own. If the rule of the single tyrant was felt to be better than the anarchy which led to it, the reason is that the tyrant was less selfish than the multitude, that he did more work for the whole, was more the servant of the whole. The law then that the greatest of all is the servant of all, had been really the law of all society, had been implied in its very existence. All confusion and wrong had come from the transgression of

it. The fondness for that transgression, the readiness to recognize it as the principle of human life and fellowship, was precisely the lie of the evil nature, the lie of the evil spirit, that which all tyranny and falsehood sustained itself upon, that which the Son of God must come to cast out. When then he took a child and set him in the midst of his disciples, He did not say that He was going to found a kingdom, which should be called the kingdom of Jesus, or the Christian kingdom, and which should have a right to set itself up, and boast itself that it was different from all kingdoms, that it came to subvert them; but He did say, in consistency with all that he had said hitherto, that He came to reveal that kingdom which lay beneath all other kingdoms, which was implied in the existence of all, that the true King, who was the true servant of all, had appeared to show what He was, what the meaning and nature of His own government had been, and to make a portion of those who ruled under him conscious of their own true position, conscious that true rule implies subjection, conscious that all selfish rivalship involves a contradiction; ready therefore, to feel with Him, that the becoming little children, the abandonment of supremacy, the acknowledgment of weakness, is the one method of making that government which he is exercising through them, feared, loved, and obeyed.

DIVORCE.

"And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." This sentence is connected in St. Matthew and St. Mark with a discourse on marriage; in St. Luke it comes in very remarkably between the parable of the unrighteous steward and that of Dives and Lazarus. I may examine hereafter, when I speak of the differences between the Evangelists, in what relation it stands to these discourses. I will only remark here, that the Pharisees, in St. Luke, as well as in St. Matthew and St. Mark, called forth the observation, and that in all three it bears

upon the nature and object of the Law. "Moses suffered us to give her a writing of divorcement, and to put her away," say the Pharisees in two of the Evangelists; and our Lord answers, "For the hardness of your hearts he gave you this precept; but from the beginning it was not so." St. Luke says, "The Law and the Prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one tittle of the law to fail. Whosoever putteth away his wife," etc.

This then is evidently set forth as a notable case, illustrating the relation between the Law of Moses and the Kingdom of Heaven. The Pharisees, who often accused our Lord of departing from the strictness of the Law, suspected that in one instance He exceeded it in strictness. He does not deny the charge. He denounces the use of a privilege which they had allowed themselves, and which Moses had permitted. And He does this in perfect harmony with the principle He had laid down in the case of the sabbath, respecting which laxity had been imputed to Him so continually. There was no laxity in one instance or in the other. He asserted the principle and idea of the sabbath, as it was set forth in the commandment which enforced it. He insisted upon the observation of that meaning and principle as essential to the keeping of the commandment. When that was forgotten, it was not kept, though no single ear of corn was plucked upon the day. In like manner, He asserted the principle and meaning of marriage, which was implied and presupposed in the very law that sanctioned divorce. The permission was on account of the hardness of their hearts, a provision for an evil emergency which the Pharisees, mistaking decrees and statutes for laws, had confounded with one of the primary inviolable institutes of society. People were pressing into the Kingdom of Heaven, in hopes of finding an easier yoke than that which the letter-worshippers had imposed upon them. They would find it easier, because it was that yoke which the heart and spirit of man were created to wear, a yoke which is the pledge of freedom and not of servitude. They

would not find it easier if they were seeking for mere licenses and exemptions. It would not cause one tittle of the Law to fail. It brought to light, re-established, placed on its deepest ground whatever belonged to the true order and constitution of humanity. The right acts which laws through their infirmity could not compel, would come forth out of the life of the Lawgiver. The irregularities which it was obliged to tolerate he would undermine.

BLESSING THE LITTLE CHILDREN.

"Then were there brought unto Him little children, that He should put His hands on them, and pray. And His disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. And He laid His hands on them, and departed thence." There is a kind of sentimental interest attached to this record which I should be sorry were separated from it; and which I could wish had a more solid foundation. It is thought that the Evangelists, one and all, felt themselves constrained to introduce it because it was such a proof of the human sympathy and tenderness of Jesus. Such assuredly it was. And the higher our idea of Him, the more precious all such tokens of His actual humanity become. But we have no right to put another construction upon the object of these writers, than their own words express. They tell us that He said, "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Because he said so, the incident deserves to be recorded in a record of the life of the Son of God upon earth. The blessing of little children was a part of the revelation of the Kingdom of Heaven. Of such would it consist, that is to say, not of men affecting the airs of little children, pretending to become children by giving up all the intellectual energies of men, pretending to be simple, and therefore being in the most inward and essential sense artificial; without any of the frankness, openness, trustfulness of children, full of craft and subtlety, because they will not, and dare not, be manly. Not such, but little children in very deed, ready to receive, and open-

ing every pore and avenue of the spirit that they may receive, full of wonder, full of the sense of ignorance, craving for knowledge and light; believing that all treasures are intended for them, all treasures of earth and heaven, even the infinite wisdom and love of God Himself. As has been so often said, the man of profoundest science is, and must be, a little child; he must cease to see himself reflected in the things about him, he must be content to see every thing as it is revealed by its own light, not as it is measured and colored by his light. Of such then must be the Kingdom of Heaven; only those who can take every thing as a gift, who think of the object, not of their own sight or faith, of Him who works in them, not of their own acts, can be the real brethren and fellow-citizens of Him who glorified not Himself, but His Father who sent Him.

THE TEMPTATIONS OF THE RICH MAN.

"And, behold, one came and said unto Him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? And He said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but One, that is, God. But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto Him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother, and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto Him, All these have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Then said Jesus unto His disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God When the disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who

then can be saved? And Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." There are very few important variations in the accounts which the three Evangelists give of this interview, and of the remarks which followed it. All readers have felt that the narrative occupies a most important place in the evangelical history. Much has been said about it; but its meaning has surely not been exhausted; it will still bear to be examined in its connection, and in its details.

Most persons, I think, must have been struck with the connection between the form of the young man's question, and the weakness which our Lord brought to light in him. "What good thing shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?" This was precisely the thought of one who had been wont to try every thing by the standards of the market, and who naturally, inevitably adopted its language when he spoke of life, or of the kingdom of heaven. Our Lord's answer, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but One," was surely addressed to this state of mind. He takes advantage of a phrase which the young man used in a mere conventional way, to set before him that which he really wanted, that which could not be measured by any of his standards, "There is none good but God," He is the good. To know Him is the life thou seekest. But how was that good, that life to be obtained? Here came in another humbling lesson, "You have got the commandments. These are given you for that end. They tell you of the things which keep you from the knowledge of God, of the acts and tendencies which put you at a distance from Him. Keep these, remember these, hold them fast in your mind, mould yourself according to them, and you will be in the way to the knowledge of Him who gave them, to the perfect Good, to the true Life." But all these the young man had kept from his youth up. Was he wrong in this assertion? Was it a lying boast? We are not told so. Every thing would lead us to the opposite conclusion. He had kept them, but not with a view to that end which our Lord set before him. He had kept them from his youth up habitually, instinctively;

and as he became more conscious of a purpose, as he began more deliberately to seek one, he kept them with a view to that result which he hoped our Lord might assist him in procuring. He thought obedience to them would buy him so many blessings in a future life, or would rescue him from so many punishments in it. Still he felt that more was wanted to give him the requisite security. Unquestionably he never put the thought distinctly before himself, that he was bargaining with the Almighty. His gentle and graceful, even gracious, mind would have revolted at such language. But this was his misfortune. He did not set the case clearly before himself; he was living in a dim twilight, not distinctly aware of his own feelings or objects, ignorant how entirely his thoughts of heaven were shaped and colored by his earthly circumstances. He was therefore willing to give so much over and above his observation of the commandments for the sake of making his title to the felicity of which he dreamed, and to a deliverance from the terrors of which his conscience spoke, absolutely clear and undoubted. Our Lord takes him at his word. "Thou wilt give up much to obtain heaven. Go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, follow me. You feel there is some hinderance to being all that you ought to be, all that you wish to be. You are right; there is such a hinderance. There is something which turns all your thoughts about right and good awry, which gives them a false direction and a false object. Give up the thing which thou lovest better than God, and thou wilt know what He is; thou wilt have treasure in heaven." Here was the test. He had never known before what his heaven was; now he found it out. The life he was seeking was the earthly life, though he called it eternal life. By eternal, he meant the indefinite prolongation of that kind of good which he had been here dwelling in. It is not the Evangelist's business to give us the issue of the story. One cheering hint they do give us, upon which we may build plausible conclusions respecting the history of the young man. He went away sad. He had learnt to know himself as he had never known himself before, to have a discontent with himself

which he had till then never experienced. All good may have come out of that sadness. His past keeping of the commandments, the gracious dispositions which St. Mark says, "our Lord beheld and loved," may not in any sense have been wasted. If he could not break his own idol to pieces, God may have broken it for him ; or he may have been afterwards one of those who learnt to call nothing their own, to bring all their goods and lay them at the Apostles' feet. Of him we know nothing. This fragment of his history is recorded, because upon it our Lord grounded the remark, "How hardly shall a rich man enter into the kingdom of God." Why was this so hard? The Apostles were astonished beyond measure, for who then could be saved? The rich man had time to devote to the service of God. He had money to give for the help of the poor. If he could not fulfil the duties, practice the virtues, earn the prizes of the Divine Kingdom, who could? If the Kingdom of Heaven were not altogether something different from that which the young ruler, or the Apostles themselves at that time, were acknowledging, how perfectly natural and reasonable were his thoughts and theirs! If it was a kingdom such as John had spoken of, such as our Lord in all His parables and miracles had set forth, a kingdom nigh at hand, having its throne in the heart and spirit of every human being, the kingdom of the Son of God over the creatures who were made in his image, how certain it was that every thing which led them to seek in the world without for the treasures which were stored in Himself, were hinderances to the confession of His dominion, hinderances which it was impossible for man, though it was possible for God, to overcome. If the Kingdom of Heaven were a universal kingdom, into which all of every degree were to be admitted, how obvious it was that the external possessions which made one man think himself above another, and unwilling to take up his position among his brethren, were also all but insurmountable barriers. Unless the rich man could become in the most inward and essential sense poor, he could no more shrink into the dimensions which would fit him to enter the strait gate, than a camel could go through the eye of a needle.

THE TEMPTATION OF THE POOR MAN.

"Then answered Peter and said unto Him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefor? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my Name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first."

The words respecting the regeneration and the Son of Man sitting on the throne of His glory, are peculiar to St. Matthew, and as such will demand our consideration hereafter.

The particular form of St. Peter's phrase, "What shall we have therefor?" also belongs to him. Hence, I apprehend, arises the difference in the rest of the passage. A great part of the emphasis of the whole story in St. Matthew evidently rests on the last verse, which is the text of the parable of "the Husbandmen and Laborers in the Vineyard." St. Mark does not give the same selfish form to St. Peter's demand; he merely says, "Then Peter began to say, Lo, we have left all, and followed Thee." But as he had used the same phrase in the 8th Chapter, when Peter called our Lord to account for the prophecy of His humiliation, and when he received his great rebuke, I conceive he did mean to imply nearly what is intimated in the other Evangelists. Although therefore he omits the parable, he introduces the words, "Many that are last shall be first, and the first last," in the same significant way. In St. Luke we read merely, "Lo, we have left all, and followed Thee." By him the words, "Many that are first shall be last," are omitted. They occur in the 13th Chapter of St. Luke, in connection with the great answer to the question, "Are there few that shall be saved?"

These remarks could not so well be introduced in speaking of

the direct differences of the Evangelists. They may serve to explain how apparently accidental omissions or additions in narratives that are substantially the same, bring out the meaning which is common to them. There can be no doubt, I imagine, from the language of all the Evangelists, that our Lord meant to tell Peter that the blessing of those who really left all for the Gospel could not be exaggerated. If they had left all and followed Christ, there were houses, lands, persecutions, friends, mothers, brothers, sisters, everlasting life, in store for them. It is intimated as clearly, that while he was still asking "what shall we *have* therefor?" *he* had not left all. He was bargaining for wages, wishing to get more than others by his sacrifices. At the end of the day, if such a habit of mind continued, he would be angry when the great Householder admitted those who he thought had toiled less, to the same blessing as himself. The instruction therefore to the poor fishermen is essentially the same as that to the rich ruler. The discourses cannot be separated. They were still in a measure self-seekers as he was; in a measure, I say, for no one can suppose that they had really followed Christ upon a calculation. They were drawn after Him by a power, a love, which they could not resist. They clung to Him, and lost themselves in Him; so far they were already in seed and germ what they afterwards became. But the habit of mind which belonged to their country, which belongs to the evil nature of every man, which was encouraged by the pharisaic religion, and almost constituted it, still hung about them. They were still fancying as the ruler did, that certain measurable sacrifices would secure a certain measurable felicity. The associations of the market were not banished from their contemplation of eternal life. One great lesson comes out of the answers to them, that the mistakes of men are not treated by the Divine teacher according to the rule of the great human teacher, that a stick which has an inclination to bend one way, must be turned the other. On the contrary, He, both in dealing with the ruler and with His own disciples, goes all lengths with them; He admits that eternal life is to be obtained by sacrifice, and only

shows them how the selfishness of their minds is really making sacrifice, in any true sense of the word, impossible.

THE GOING UP TO JERUSALEM.

I have spoken already of two announcements of the Passion, especially of that which followed the Transfiguration. But the passage which follows immediately after the discourse with the ruler and with Peter, in all the three Evangelists, is introduced so significantly—little phrases in each indicate that it left so deep an impression upon the disciples—as to forbid that we should pass it over, under pretence of its being a mere repetition of what has gone before. "And Jesus going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles, to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him; and the third day He shall rise again."

What I wish to fix your attention upon is, that the emphasis in this passage is made, by each Evangelist, to rest on the words, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem."

Our Lord had already spoken of His passion and resurrection in connection with His own character as the Son of God. There was another aspect in which they must be viewed, in connection with the holy city, with the people who would reject Him. St. Luke, perhaps, makes us feel with more clearness than the other Evangelists how continually this thought was present to the mind of our Lord Himself. But the more diligently we study both the others, the more we shall find how much the entry into Jerusalem is by them also regarded as the crisis in the history of their nation, and therefore in the history of all nations. Never for a moment have they lost sight of an approaching judgment in their view of the great Deliverer, never have they forgotten that a baptism of the Holy Ghost is also to be a baptism of fire. We shall feel how needful this consideration is when we come to the next step in the narrative.

THE DESCENT FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

"And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, the Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee."

This is one of the narratives which belongs to the fourth Gospel as well as to the first three. I am not now to consider St. John's reasons for introducing it. Every one has felt how important a place it occupies in those which are called the synoptical Gospels. Every one also, I suppose, has perceived that the passage is meant to describe a royal entrance into the city of David, an entrance for which there had been a long previous preparation, which even at the time the immediate disciples of our Lord, deriving their impression from Himself, regarded as the beginning of a series of great and solemn events. What would come of this to Him quite unusual method of announcing His dignity, why He who had been merely the prophet among fishermen in Galilee, should court the vengeance which he

seemed to expect in the capital of his enemies, why, if He must enter the city towards which he had so long set his face, he did not more carefully than ever before eschew any conduct which might excite the suspicion of the Roman Governor, or furnish the Pharisees with a new and valid pretext against Him ; this the disciples might in vain try to guess. But that this entry did stand in some very close relation to that Kingdom of which He had been speaking in all His parables, which He had been illustrating by all His miracles, they could not doubt. If He wished them to think that He was not a king, or one only in some imaginary, metaphorical sense, why seize just this moment and just this manner of conveying an impression to their minds, which all after events could not efface, but must deepen?

This is the kind of question which we should naturally urge upon those who are wont to read the Gospels with perfect faith in their genuineness and their inspiration, but only as the history of a Divine Teacher, not chiefly or primarily as the history of a Divine King. Those who look upon the Evangelists as vulgar men united by the superstition of their country in the common belief that Jesus was coming to depose the Cæsars, and restore the dynasty of David in Judæa, will of course eagerly grasp at this evidence in favor of their conclusion. And surely they are entitled to any benefit which they can derive from the most exact meaning which can be attached to the words of the Evangelists ; they have a right to demand that no vague uncritical signification shall be attached to the description of an event evidently so important in the eyes of the writers, the one from which they date the last and greatest period of their history. If upon an attentive consideration of the words which I have quoted from St. Matthew, the Ebionite Evangelist, as we are told he is, the one in whom, after all later excisions and spiritualizations, there is said to remain the most marked traces of old Judaical materialism, it shall be found that there is any thing whatsoever which is inconsistent with that idea of a kingdom, of a real, actual, present kingdom, a kingdom which was the real fulfilment of the one David established, but because real, present, imme-

diate, Davidian, Jewish, therefore in the deepest sense spiritual, lying at the root of things, existing in the person of One who had from the first upheld all things by the word of His power; if there is one phrase in St. Matthew's narrative which after the severest examination is found to interfere with the impression which all his previous history has left upon us, then I admit, not merely that the story of the descent from the Mount of Olives is a perplexing passage in itself, but that it perplexes all which precedes and follows it.

But there is no such word. Every thing here is royal, but there are none of the trappings of royalty. He calls for the ass, and the owner feels that it must be yielded up, because the Lord has need of it. The ass is the ordinary beast upon which the judge of old rode, yet it is the symbol of lowliness. He is welcomed with branches of palm-trees, and with hosannas; but the honors are paid Him by a band of insignificant followers. Turn the narrative which way soever you will, consider the general impression which it produces, or look into its minutest details, and there is every thing to bear out the impression of quiet invisible power which will make itself to be felt, but which will not come with observation, which claims the homage of human hearts as the highest it can receive, before it shows to what master those hearts which refuse the homage are surrendering themselves. This is precisely the teaching which we have received from every passage we have studied hitherto in these Gospels. If there were a history composed of such passages, if the scene of it was laid in the land of Judæa, if every step of it was connected with an approaching crisis in the history of the land, and of its chief city, should not we look for this consummation, should we not feel that there was a blank in the story if it was wanting? All Christendom has felt, the conviction has been expressed in the language of art and in the language of books of devotion, by those who were meditating the Scriptures for their own spiritual profit, by those who were looking upon them as documents for the history of the world, that the meekest and lowliest of men did enter Jerusalem to say, "I am your Ruler and Lord. Will

you own me in that character? If you do not, the stones of your city will cry out. The real invisible bond which keeps them together will be destroyed; in a little time not one will be left upon another." I appeal to the existence of this conviction which has struck such deep roots, and has found for itself such manifold expressions, in proof of my original assertion, that I am not maintaining any novel hypothesis respecting these Gospels, but am merely bringing out the truth which the conscience of modern Europe has implicitly recognized, and showing that instead of its being grounded on some symbolical or mystical interpretation, it is the only one which is compatible with the literal understanding of these books, the only one which explains the connection of their different parts. What has been wanting, I conceive, to give this belief its full power and consistency, has been a more full and frank acknowledgment that Christ is the King of Men, and not merely the King of that particular portion of men who were permitted to call themselves by His Name. Our selfishness has robbed Him of more than half His glory, and threatens at last to deprive us of the blessing which we have refused to share. But I am anticipating future observations.

JESUS GOING INTO THE TEMPLE.

If the last passage contains one of the few coincidences between that part of St. John's Gospel which precedes the history of the passion and the narratives of the other three Evangelists, the passage which follows contains almost the only memorable instance of a strong apparent disagreement between him and them. He seems to place the story of our Lord's entrance into the Temple to cast out them that sold and bought in it, at the passover which followed His first miracle; they are unanimous in connecting it with His final entry into Jerusalem. St. Matthew's account of the event is essentially the same with that of the rest. "And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew

the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." Every one of the three Evangelists intimates that this act produced a great impression upon the chief priests; every one of them seems to connect with it the question, "By what authority doest thou these things?" and the parable to which that question gave rise. St. Matthew and St. Mark introduce the miracle of the barren fig-tree, a miracle which all have felt to be in so close a connection with the withering of the Jewish nation, as part of the narrative; St. Luke, who had spoken of his beholding the city and weeping over it just before, translates as it were the miracle into words. But why should going into the temple and assuming a right to cleanse it, seem to the priests so audacious an act of authority? Why should it be linked in the minds of the Evangelists to deeds and words which betokened an approaching catastrophe? The whole after narrative I believe will explain these feelings. If the entrance into Jerusalem on an ass was an assumption of that kingly honor which he seemed previously to have disclaimed, the entrance into the temple was a no less significant assumption of the character of the divine Son which His disciples had acknowledged, but which as yet they were forbidden to proclaim. The one act was evidence for the charge before Pilate, the other was demonstration to the chief priest that he must be condemned as a blasphemer by the Sanhedrim. What, call the Temple His Father's house, claim a right to drive out the invaders of it because it was such! Was not this the highest proof that He had committed that offence for which the law had appointed stoning? Accordingly the parable which I have considered already apart from its connection, and merely in illustration of the parables generally, has the most direct and obvious bearing upon this especial act. The Son was come to claim the fruits of the vineyard from the husbandmen; the stone had been brought in, which was the ground and corner-stone of the Temple, that it might be seen how the builders would deal with it.

THE BAPTISM OF JOHN.

I must not, however, pass over the words common to all the three Evangelists, which introduce the parable. "And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things." One part of the value of this passage consists, as all have perceived, in the witness which it bears to the general law that those who have not profited by a preparatory dispensation contract an incapacity for a higher one. But it must not be forgotten that the chief priests are here especially spoken of, in distinction from, even in contrast with, the people at large; nay, in St. Matthew's Gospel with the grosser part of the people, with the publicans and harlots. The passage then must be compared with the words in which St. John addressed the Scribes and Pharisees when they came out to his baptism; "Oh generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." The whole sin of the Pharisees is brought out in that sentence, the height and the meanness of their ambition. They were proud of being Abraham's children; they did not think it possible that the benefit of that position could be ever taken from them; they did not care to be God's children. To have the lower honor to themselves was better than to have the

higher honor shared with those whom they looked upon as mere stones. They were therefore wrapped up in a religious atheism, satisfied without feeling that they stood in any relation towards God. Of this sin, which was a proof that they had forgotten the blessings of their own covenant, John called on them to repent. They were to turn from Abraham to the God of Abraham; not to glory in their strength or in their wisdom, but in this, that they might know Him who executed righteousness and judgment upon the earth. If they did that, He would reveal Himself to them. There was One among them who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire. The chief priests had not heeded that call; therefore they could not know by what authority Christ did these things. They wished to be rulers themselves in the temple, when He whose it was had suddenly come to refine and to purify it. They did not know who He was, but they had an instinct that He was one whom they ought to obey, therefore they said, "Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours."

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CÆSAR.

"Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute-money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's." The parallel passages to this are in the twelfth chapter of Mark, from the 13th to the 18th verses, and in Luke the twentieth chapter, from the 19th to the 27th verses.

The differences between the three Evangelists here are very slight. The most considerable is that St. Matthew introduces the parable of the king making a marriage for his son between the parable of the husbandmen in the vineyard and the sending forth of the spies; that St. Mark and St. Luke refer that measure directly to the stricken conscience and bitterness of the chief priests, who perceived that these words had been spoken against them. Probably, if we consider the second parable attentively, we shall not feel this difference to be a very weighty one. It is closely related in spirit and purpose, even in form, to the other, and may well have deepened and sharpened the rage which it excited. I need not enlarge much on the question respecting the tribute-money; it will not escape, and has not escaped any, even the most superficial reader, that it bears upon our Lord's pretensions as a king, and was meant to prepare the way for the destruction of His reputation with the people, or for an accusation before the Roman Governor. Nor has it ever, as far as I know, been suggested that our Lord, in His answer to the question, renounced or explained away, even in the slightest degree, the dignity which He had seemed to assert when He entered the city. What I would chiefly complain of in the interpreters of the passage is, that they have led their readers to admire a kind of dexterity in our Lord's answer, as if it were indeed an evasion of the question, as if it did not carry out the whole meaning of His previous teaching, and present it in a new and striking application, as if it were not full of the most solemn reproof to the Pharisees and Herodians, and the profoundest lesson to the whole Jewish nation respecting the secret of its slavery. What was the deliverance the Pharisees dreamed of, and sought for? A deliverance from the payment of tribute to Cæsar. And why was that the great cause of their lamentation? Because their hearts were in bondage to covetousness, because they knew nothing of any more ignominious service than that which was signified by the presence of the publican, any emancipation greater than that which was implied in his exaction being withdrawn. But whose is this image and superscription on the tribute-

money? Is it not Cæsar's? Why should it not go to him? Whose is the image in which you are made? What superscription is written on your hearts? Render them to the invisible God, claim Him for your King, and your chains drop off; you are slaves no longer. Christ then did not merely say by this answer, "I am not come now to disturb the government of the Cæsars," but He showed why He was not come to disturb it, why He could not effectually deliver the nation by setting them free from tribute. He was come to reveal the Kingdom of God to them, to tell them that they were God's servants, and not Cæsar's; He was come, therefore, to accomplish all that the people expected from Him, if they had known what they expected; He was come to undermine the tyranny of the Cæsars, the tyranny of the Pharisees, all other tyranny in the world. Pharisees, Herodians, Romans, had a right to be suspicious of Him. He was far more really dangerous to them, and they were beginning to know it, than all the incendiaries who had ever exhorted the Israelites to throw off their yoke.

THE SADDUCEES AND THE RESURRECTION.

"The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him, saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were with us seven brethren; and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying. I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac,

and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine." It was clearly intimated in our Lord's observation respecting the leaven, that there was a habit of mind which was common to the opposing sects of the Jews. It is not enough to say that their common dislike to Him proved the existence of this radical similarity; it was quite certain that in the course of their opposition the inward nature of it would discover itself. Here was an occasion in which the Sadducees took up the line of argument which would at other times have brought them in most direct collision with the Pharisees. They strove to embarrass our Lord with a case which must have served for the topic of many a debate, and many a jest, when they were refuting the doctors of the other school. And yet here our Lord detected a temper of mind very closely akin to that which He had just exposed in the men who asked Him whether it was lawful to pay tribute unto Cæsar. The idea of God as a Lord of the heart and reins, as a spiritual Being related to His spiritual creature, was wanting in the Pharisee, it was wanting also in the Sadducee. Neither, therefore, were able to enter into the history of their forefathers. The old commonwealth of Israel, the kingdom of David, the new city after the captivity, was not regarded by the Pharisees as really under the dominion of an invisible Lord, who was reigning over it from generation to generation: it was only a state separated by certain religious privileges and distinctions from all others, and entitled to look down upon them. The Roman yoke therefore was bitterly galling; but it never led them to cry out for a real, divine government, only for a government in which they should be supreme. The Sadducees had neither less nor more apprehension of a living God. They were not nominally atheists, probably the most violent Pharisee would not have given them that name; but their belief was in a dead god, in one who had established a law, or laid down maxims of morality, which men were thenceforth to keep for themselves, by which they were to regulate their conduct. But that this Being was still,—nay, that

He had ever stood in any actual relation to His creatures, that He could communicate with them, or that they could in any actual sense call upon Him, they did not and could not believe. Therefore they logically, consistently, honestly, repudiated the idea of a resurrection. It was a loss, no doubt, to be without the relic and shell of such a conviction, to have said distinctly to themselves, "Our life is bounded by the conditions of it in this world; when the appearances of things disappear, we shall disappear with them; the laws which govern us are merely the circumstances in which we dwell. Man has nothing in him but that which is determined by measures of time and space." But so the Pharisee really believed also. His doctrine of a resurrection was merely the carrying out beyond the grave of all the low, selfish, carnal notions and maxims which had governed him on this side of it. To this cause we may attribute perhaps the mildness of the rebukes, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God," as compared with the "Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?" in the former case. But the practical correction of the error, was even deeper, and yet simpler than that which defined the difference between the obligations to Cæsar and to God. "Have ye not read in the Scriptures that God saith, I am the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Whatever you may think about the prophets, you acknowledge the simple records of the Book of Genesis as having some worth. The principle of the resurrection is there. Once believe in God as the same yesterday and to-day, as the God of men from generation to generation, as really connected with them; once believe Him to be ever alive, and you believe in their life. And you become disentangled from these notions which have led you astray when you were considering whose wife the woman should be of the seven; for you begin to contemplate men in their higher relation to God, and therefore in higher relations to each other." Here is the preparation for all the after teaching respecting the resurrection. Its ground is laid in the deepest theology, and yet in the earliest revelation of God. Thus were the Sadducees

taught, and the Pharisees no less, that to understand and believe in a resurrection they must seek for some One in whom they could realize an actual relation to an actual and living Being. Thus was the question presented to their minds whether their dislike to the idea of a Son of God was not the real inward ground of their dislike to the idea of a resurrection, and whether without the belief of a Son of God a resurrection is any thing but a dark and fearful vision of a probable promulgation and extension of the world's wretchedness.

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

"While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions." This question is given, with slight variations, in the twelfth of Mark, from the 35th to the 38th verses, and in the twentieth of Luke, from the 41st to the 45th verses. It is one of the few questions which our Lord is said by the three Evangelists to have directly addressed to the people, or to the scribes, without any immediate provocation upon their part. It occurs in close connection with all the passages which we have lately been considering, and it is placed in all the Gospels very shortly before the last Passover. All evidently considered that though it led to no direct or obvious result, though it was a short question and one which found no answer, though our Lord raised the difficulty without giving the solution, it yet deserved an emphatical, enduring record. Did not every event they had been recording or were about to record, in fact, contain this question? Were not those events taken in connection with the whole past history of the nation, with all the future history of the human race, to give

the reply? "How is it possible that Christ can be both the Son of David and the Lord of David? How can He fail to be either if your Scriptures are true?" This was the tormenting awful paradox to the Pharisee, the paradox in his own being as well as in the divine Books, from which he could find but one way of delivering himself. After eighteen centuries it is still the question which is presented to every Jew and every Christian man, and which Christians as well as Jews are disposed to get rid of almost as the Pharisee did. If there is to be a King, a Son of Man over Men, must He not be the Son of God? If there is a Son of God must He not be the King over men? Could the Christ fulfil one character unless He fulfilled the other? The Crucifixion was man's attempt to remove the difficulty; the Resurrection was God's.

THE PROPHECY OF THE LAST DAYS.

[Matthew xxiv.; Mark xiii.; Luke xxi. ver. 5, to the end.] We come now to those memorable chapters which contain the report of our Lord's conversation with His disciples when they showed Him the goodly stones of the temple. I shall follow St. Matthew as I have done hitherto, noticing any memorable differences in the other Evangelists by the way.

I. There is no difference about the occasion which suggested the discourse. The disciples were struck with the goodly stones of the temple. Whatever else His words may have imported, they declared directly that one stone was upon another of that building which should not be thrown down. This is too obvious a remark to have escaped any one's notice, but its very obviousness may have hindered it from receiving all the attention which it deserves. Consider what that building meant to a Jew. Consider that the tabernacle was the sign of God's presence in the nation, that the loss of it while it was in Shiloh was looked upon as the temporary downfall of the nation itself, that its removal to the hill over Jerusalem was connected with the Davidian covenant,—with the past and future history,—with the most

rapturous and the most deep of the Psalms in which the meaning of that history is gathered up. Consider what the building and dedication of the temple itself, and the removal of the Ark into it by Solomon, implied. Consider how much of the prophecy of Isaiah turns upon that passage, where he speaks of his sitting in the temple in the year that King Uzziah died, and seeing the glory of the Lord which filled it. Consider that the whole prophecy of Jeremiah, and his Lamentations afterwards, refer to the expected or accomplished desecration of that temple; that all the visions of Ezekiel begin, are bound up with, and conclude with its desertion and its restoration; that its present downfall and the anticipation of a future abomination of desolation to be set up in the midst of it, connect themselves with the history of Daniel, and of all the Jews in the captivity; that the temple is the obvious subject of the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah; that the expectation of One who should come to purify it, and the priests within it, seems to be the central thought in Malachi; consider this, and we shall have some apprehension of the relation of this subject to all the books of the Old Testament, and so far as these books describe and interpret the purposes of God, to all His discipline and education of mankind. There was the place which signified to the Jew, and declared to the universe, that a God whom the eye could not see nor the ear hear, who might not be conceived in the likeness of any thing in Heaven, or earth, or under the earth, had yet a real substantial being, an actual connection with his creatures, was dwelling near them, might be approached by them. Of this building our Lord told His disciples not one stone should be left upon another. What could they think of such an announcement? St. Matthew says in words—the other two Evangelists intimate—what their feelings was, "Tell us," they said privately as He sat on the Mount of Olives, "when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the age?" Either the destruction of the temple must be the sign that God had left the world, the commencement of an absolute atheism, or it must be the sign of the commencement of a higher state of things, of the

kingdom of One greater than the temple, who should bring God and man into nearer relations with each other, who should prove the God of Abraham to be indeed the Lord of the whole earth. One of these alternatives I conceive the Apostles must have taken. They had faith and courage amidst the utmost perplexity and confusion to think that their Master had spoken truly when He said that the Kingdom of God was at hand. We seem to have come to the conclusion that they were mistaken. Our Lord did not tell them so.

II. I do not propose to go into any inquiry respecting the real force of the words "Thy coming, and the end of the age," nor even respecting the force which the Apostles at this time must have attached to such words. Their actual meaning is precisely what we have to ascertain from the subsequent history and revelation; this discourse of our Lord's upon earth being itself one of our great guides in the inquiry. The views of the Apostles were of course confused about this subject as they were about all others, about the Christ Himself and His kingdom, about His relation to themselves, and to their nation, and to the universe. This confusion is assumed throughout the Evangelists, so that those who attach weight to their statements must acknowledge it much more readily than any modern philosopher can. But it is quite a different thing to say that the words which they used were wrong words, or that they expected too decisive a fulfilment of them, or that they were wrong in placing that fulfilment in their own time. Religious people in our day may attach to the words Heaven and Hell, and Judgment, very vague and very false notions indeed, notions at variance with Scripture, borrowed from heathenism, self-destructive. Yet those who labor to correct these dangerous perplexities, may feel that the words themselves have a tremendous reality and significance, and that the force of them is not exaggerated, but fearfully weakened, by the vulgar apprehensions of them. So we may believe also that the Apostles were not using too large words when they asked this question of our Lord, words which demand a looser and vaguer interpretation than they bore in their minds, before

we can adopt them ; we may hold that they had not yet learnt to give them a sufficiently rigid definition, to understand them in their actual and literal power.

III. "And Jesus answering said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you : for many shall come in my Name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many." Few interpreters have doubted that *these* words were intended as warnings to the particular persons who were then looking at the buildings of the temple. . And supposing that this was actually the admonition which our Lord gave them, one can see how exactly it was in accordance with all His previous instructions and warnings. The great peril of the Apostles, as of all men, was that of being led away by a false Christ—that of being led to look for a King who should come with such signs as the Pharisees demanded of a Christ, or such as the people demanded of Him—with signs altogether different in kind from those with which Jesus had come. Many such, He assures them, would show themselves, many persons claiming to be the heirs of David's throne, to bring with them the marks and credentials of a divine mission. How was it possible, the Apostles might well ask themselves, that after they had believed Jesus to be the Christ, they should ever imagine another to have that name. But the warning was given them. They must have believed with wonder even then that they needed it ; in time they would know why they needed it.

IV. "Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars : see that ye be not troubled : for all these things must needs be ; but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom ; and there shall be famines, and pestilence, and earthquakes, in divers places ; all these things are the beginnings of sorrows." Still every word that is spoken appears to be addressed in the most direct manner to the Apostles. "*Ye* shall hear ; see that *ye* be not troubled." If we suppose that this does not refer to actual tidings which would reach the Apostles' ears, rumors which would prevail in Judæa, and would have first an immediate reference to insurrections in that land,

to quarrels between the rulers in its immediate neighborhood, to threatenings of destruction from the imperial power, we show the most strange indifference to accuracy of language. If any one is scandalized by the words, "nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom," and shall ask how such general language could apply to the condition and case of a city in one province of the empire, I say, Read the history of the Roman Empire generally, and see how events belonging to particular nations and places affected the position and feeling of the legions in those places—led to disputes, rivalries, military insurrections, conflicts between particular leaders—finally, spread with magnetic influence through the empire, encouraged the legions in the most distant provinces to set up their leaders, till every part of the world, and the great centre of it, was ultimately brought within the circle of the contention. Or read the records of the particular period, from the end of the reign of Nero to the overthrow of Jerusalem, not in Josephus, but in the histories of Tacitus, and see how much the most stirring events of that tremendous time of convulsions were associated with the province of Syria, and with events of which every Jew must have had the bitterest experience. So that whether or not we admit the existence of a divine purpose for the nations and mankind, which was connected with the calamities that came upon Jerusalem, we shall be compelled to admit, as a matter of fact, that the whole world must have seemed to a Jew to be sharing the convulsions which were shaking his own land to its foundations. I do not use this word convulsions, for the sake of explaining metaphorically, or morally, the words "earthquakes, pestilences, and famines in divers places;" I take these words to mean precisely what they seem to mean; I do not think that any one who reads Tacitus can doubt that they occurred just as they are here said to occur *in divers places*. There was not to be a *general* physical earthquake commensurate with the great political earthquake; but there would be enough to be signs and proofs that the physical world sympathizes with the moral, is under the same ruler, does homage to its laws. It would seem as if our Lord's

object was especially to warn His disciples that while they took notice of these signs they should not be distracted by them, or think *them* the great indications that God was come out of His place to judge the earth. "All these things are the *beginning* of sorrows."

V. "Then shall they deliver you up to the afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my Name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." I have taken this entire paragraph because the words which wind it up, stand in such direct contrast to those which concluded the previous one. "These are the *beginning* of sorrows." "Then shall the *end* come." Wars, rumors of wars, earthquakes, and famines, are not the signs of the end. They are but preludes to it. The preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom is the sign that the end is coming. But I have also brought these verses together, because I think that the great difficulty which is supposed to lie in the 14th is removed by the 9th. "Ye shall be hated of all nations." "The Gospel shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." Now I do not suppose that the mere words "the whole world" would hinder any one from believing that these words were fulfilled in the apostolical age. Even the most careless reader would recollect at once that Augustus Cæsar commanded all the world to be taxed, and would suppose that the expression in one case meant the same as in the other. The stumbling-block is in the other words "all nations." But these words we see had just before been used in a sentence which *must* apply directly to the apostles. The preaching of this Gospel of the kingdom then as a witness to all the nations or all the Gentiles, would seem to be precisely that which a Jew would have

concluded it to be. If all the different representatives of the Gentile races with which the Jews were acquainted, in whose lands they were settled, were told that Jesus was their King, that they were as much parts of the Kingdom of God as the Jews, the witness would have been borne which is here spoken of. If it is to be a contest of special pleading, I could special plead also. I could say—if the different great stems of the modern European population and of the Transatlantic population also were in Asia, *non constat* that all the different tribes of the earth, now known to us or to be hereafter known, were not brought within the sound of the Gospel of this kingdom, and that without adopting any loose and vague tradition respecting the missions of the apostles to the different distant regions of the earth. But there is no need of such arguments; I simply adhere to the text. The words are addressed to the Apostles that they were to be hated by all the nations. In whatever sense they understood that to be true, they must have understood that they were to be the instruments of preaching the Gospel to all the nations; consequently that after something which they had done,—at a certain time within their age,—the end was to come. Many, no doubt, may shrink from the notion that iniquity abounded, and that the love of many in the Christian world waxed cold during the apostolical age. Whether facts justify that skepticism, we shall be able to determine better when we come to consider the apostolical writings, and some remarkable testimonies of Christian antiquity, which will also bear directly upon the question of the rise of false prophets in the same period.

VI. "When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place, (whoso readeth let him understand,) then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains: let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath-day: for then shall be great tribulation,

such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Without professing to determine what was the precise desecration of the Temple here indicated, I would call your attention to the fact that our Lord continues to fix the thoughts of His disciples upon that object on which their eyes were already fixed; that the Temple is really the subject of His discourse just as we should suppose from its commencement that it would be, and that all the calamities which are said to be greater than any the world had seen or would see, as well as the flight which is enjoined upon the disciples, are connected with it. If the family of Mattathias had no difficulty in determining when the abomination of desolation had been set up in their days, the disciples might hope even in this time of their half belief and ignorance, that they should be instructed wherein consisted the more complete desertion of the Divine presence which their Lord was preparing them to expect.

VII. "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." That the "then" here refers to the event which has been last spoken of, that the "you" means some of those who are asking the question, we should at once conclude if we had not very decisive evidence of the contrary; until that evidence shall be clearly made out we must not assume that words are to be less strictly

construed, because they refer to events of the deepest urgency and solemnity. Supposing these words then to have their obvious signification, would they have led the Apostles to think first the appearing of the Son of Man would be in their own age? I apprehend that there cannot be a doubt of it. False Christs and false profits would appear; the true Christ would appear to confound them. The undoubted confidence in *His* appearing would be the only deliverance from *their* deceptions. But secondly, would this appearing be a visible one? Most visible I apprehend in its effects, most visible in the signs which would accompany it. But not visible in that sense in which the false Christs and false prophets would be visible. For would not their falsehood consist in this especially, that they would come to reform the world upon the opposite principle to that on which the Son of God had come, viz., to make alterations in its surface, to change the outside of things; whereas He had come to lay the axe to the root of the trees. In whatever judgment in the world He manifested Himself He must come for this end. How then would these words of our Lord act upon the disciples' minds, supposing them really to take them in, not to pervert them according to previous notions of their own, but to use them for the correction of those notions? Must they not have said to them, *did* they not say to them, "all these visible appearances of men who lead you out into the desert or into the secret chamber, will be very tempting indeed to you, because it is the greatest temptation possible to human beings to seek Me in the outward world, and not to seek Me as the Lord of the hearts and reins, to change Me into a Cæsar, and not regard Me as a real, divine King, to think of Me as a judge sitting upon some exalted seat like that on which the lords of the earth sit, and not to think of Me as the Judge who looks down into the depths of every spring and principle of action, into the very inmost heart of society; before whose presence every thing must stand revealed in its inward nakedness; before whom every falsehood must fly away." As the lightning which lighteneth from the one part of Heaven and shineth even to the other, so shall the coming of the Son of Man

be. Mighty and divine words to shatter in pieces all sensual dreams which substitute an apparent for a real Christ! "Think not of the desert, think not of the chamber, but think of a light which is felt at once in all parts of Heaven, and as an illuminating yet a terrific power upon earth, when you want to have a symbol of my appearing. For do not suppose," He seems to go on, "that it will be only in one place, just where the temple stands, that this great judgment of which I am telling you will be felt and realized. You Jews are scattered over all different parts of the earth. Everywhere you bear about the sign of a divine covenant, you are intended to be health-givers, life-givers to the world. The life has departed out of the body, it has become a carcase. Wherever any portion of it is lying there will be the birds of prey descend to feed upon it, there will God's commissioned destroyers be found gathered together. In all these different places there will be a manifestation of the Son of Man. There will be clear tokens everywhere that He is come out of His place to judge the chosen people, and through them to judge the whole earth."

VIII. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." There is not the least difference here in the Evangelists except that there is perhaps something more picturesque in the

words of St. Luke, "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." A comparison of the two passages seems to show very clearly that actual signs in the visible heavens must be intended here, as in the case of which I spoke before. Whoever has interpreted the words to signify political changes for the sake of getting rid of any physical allusions, has certainly done violence to the text. St. Luke's language especially seems clearly to intimate that physical appearances and convulsions would be those that would startle men most, as we know they always do; which would be *felt* as most portentous and ominous. But ominous surely of something. They are not themselves the things which they portend. There must therefore be a justification for those who make "the powers of heaven" to mean more (not *less*) than mere signs in the moon and stars. When they have said they mean *dynasties* I cannot feel that they are to be condemned as weakening the force of the words, for surely the fall of a dynasty is a much greater event than the eruption of a volcano. But I do not think that they have reached the full force of the words, or that their interpretation is literal enough.

All the dynasties of the old world confessed something higher than themselves. The king confessed kings to whom he must do homage, dynasts to whom he must bow in the heaven above and in the earth beneath. I need not stop to remark how much astrology was connected with worship, how much powers and demons ruling in sun and stars were looked upon as the supports of earthly thrones. I apprehend then it is the simplest way of construing our Lord's words to understand Him as saying that these powers of heaven were to be shaken, that the thrones of these demons and demi-gods were to totter. Such an interpretation I think commends itself to the conscience and understanding as one demanding no sort of strain, perfectly in accordance with the ordinary language of those to whom it was addressed,

according also with the facts of heathen life and history, involving no other confusion than that which actually existed in the minds of the false worshippers between the visible and invisible, the physical and spiritual—a confusion which therefore the words, if they are true, ought to express. Whether or no the words in this sense were fulfilled, we shall have to inquire hereafter; I am now occupied only with the prophecy. The same remark applies to the next verse: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." I am not now to say what the sign of the Son of Man was, nor how the tribes of the earth mourned at that sign, nor how they saw Him coming in the clouds of heaven; I will merely say that the words, if taken in connection with those that go before, must intimate a victory of the Son of Man over those powers of heaven to which men had been doing homage, a victory which should be felt in some very striking and terrible way by the tribes of the earth, a victory which should have some obvious and visible accompaniments. It must moreover, one would say, be the victory of Christ as a living person, not of a religion or a doctrine; a victory which, whether it was understood or not at the time by the "tribes" which it caused to tremble, would be understood at once by those who had passed out of the darkness of the world and saw things in God's light; would be understood in a measure by some on earth; would leave the deepest marks of itself in the world's history—marks which would at last make it evident that the greatest and most memorable of all crises had taken place. Whatever this sign and this appearance of the Son of Man may have been, they must, one would think, answer to these conditions in order that they may correspond to the words which describe them. They cannot also be inconsistent with the words uttered just before, which say that the coming of the Son of Man should be as the lightning that lighteneth out of one part of heaven and shineth even to the other.

The next words, "And He shall send his angels with a great

sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other;" exactly correspond to the description in the seventh chapter of the Apocalypse. When I speak of that book I shall endeavor to consider their meaning carefully. At present I will only remark, that so far as the context can determine their meaning, they would seem to be most closely linked to the desecration and overthrow of the temple. More exact language than "immediately after the tribulation of those days," which governs the whole of this passage, can scarcely be imagined. If we judge of them by their relation to the Gospel in which they occur, and to the other two Gospels, we shall be struck with the suitableness of such words to the tenor of John the Baptist's first prophecy, and of all our Lord's prophecies that have preceded them. The people who had boasted of their election, who had said, "We have Abraham to our father," would be left without a capital or a temple, the great witnesses of its divine meaning. But the purpose of the election would stand; God would raise up children to Abraham; He would show why He had called the chosen people; a deeper society and kingdom would be found to be hidden beneath theirs.

For how does our Lord continue? "Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." All these events, in which one sees at first only the icy hand of winter withering and destroying, are really the foretastes of a coming summer; death is the preparation for life. Instead of being cast down, you are to lift up your heads when they appear; it is of redemption, not ruin, that they speak. The regeneration of the world—the manifestation of that kingdom which your fathers died expecting, which I have told you is at hand, which I have come to reveal, will be the fruits of that judgment which will not leave one stone of this goodly building upon another.

He says this, and then He adds, "Verily I say unto you, This

generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." He had said before, "*immediately* after the tribulation." He had said just now, "when *ye* shall see all these things." He says now, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." Language more awful cannot be conceived. I do not claim that any importance or solemnity shall be attached to it by those who think that the person who uttered it was only Matthew the publican, or that it is a more or less accurate report of the sayings of a good man who might be deceived. But I do claim that those who think that these are the words of the Son of God, of Him who spake as never man spake, those who dwell earnestly and passionately on the inspiration and authority of the record which contains them, should take care how they trifle with these, "Verily I say unto you," and, "Heaven and earth shall pass away." Let them observe that the language becomes more exact, more carefully emphatic, in those parts of the discourse which they suppose *cannot* have had a fulfilment at the time of the destruction of the Jewish temple, than in those which they eagerly assert, and produce passages from Josephus to show, had a fulfilment at that time. Let them mark the whole sequence of the discourse, as well as all the most minute points and phrases in it, and then ask themselves whether they can be satisfied with that explanation of the word "generation," to which Mede gave currency, and which has been adopted in slavish deference to his authority, or in eager delight that any escape from such severe language can be discovered. Do they think that when our Lord said that the temple should be destroyed He only meant that it should be destroyed before the Jewish race ceased to exist? Do they think that he did not intend γενεα (generation) to bear its ordinary sense at all in the minds of the Apostles? Were they not to expect that the city would be compassed with Roman armies within that age? Consider, I beseech you, that it is a very different thing to maintain that a prophecy may have a double or treble sense, where by double or treble you mean that what is

true of one time may be even more clearly and emphatically true of another, just as ordinary historians have remarked that the same principles swayed the conduct of Charlemagne and of Napoleon, that even the facts of the history repeat themselves, and that the laws which govern those facts are brought out more completely in the latest facts than in the earlier; and to use words in a double sense, where by "double" we mean that the signification of them in the very same narrative or discourse is changed, so that it is at the pleasure of the interpreter to make them signify one thing in reference to one part of the subject and another in reference to another. To say that a prophet not only does, but that he must transgress the limits of a single event when he lays down a great law of the Divine Mind, is to claim for him that very insight and foresight which his name implies; to say that he palters with words in a double sense, is nothing less than to call him a false prophet, to identify him with a heathen oracle. If Mede and his followers had only said, "Heaven and earth may pass away, but Christ's words cannot pass away," those words cannot have exhausted themselves at the time of the destruction of the temple: the law of the Divine Mind which was fulfilled in that act must be eternal because He is eternal; we are living under His government as they were, therefore what came to pass in that generation must be a guide and text-book for subsequent generations;" how much one would have honored their sentence, how thankful one would have been to them for help in reading the future by the light of the past! But when they say, "Our Lord did not intend to say that *all* things should come to pass in that generation, though He used these very words, but only *some* things, leaving us at liberty to determine which belonged to that time, and which belonged to ages hence;" all security in the reading of the Divine Word seems to be lost; no neologian more effectually undermines the authority of the Evangelists, nay, of our Lord Himself, than these honest and earnest believers.

IX. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe

were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Immediately after our Lord had so emphatically declared, "All these things shall come to pass in this generation," He adds, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." The Apostles had asked when these things should come to pass, when the end of the age should be, when the coming of the Son of Man should be. He certainly appears to answer very distinctly, in various and yet most harmonious modes of expression. "It will be within this age, within the ordinary term of a human life, within the period to which the lives of some of you will actually extend. Some of you may be brought before kings and rulers, and may be put to death before the actual critical moment arrives; but all of you will be witnesses to events which, as I have explained to you, are the forerunners and warnings of it. More than this I cannot tell you. The day and the hour of that crisis are not revealed. Men know them not, the angels know them not; only the Father knows them. Men who are so deeply interested in the event will have all the preparations for it that they can want. The inhabitants of the invisible world, who are no less interested in it, will understand more clearly that it has occurred, and what is the meaning of it. But the first must understand by watching and waiting; by maintaining an attitude of spiritual expectation, not by guessing about times and seasons; the other will not need or wish to form such guesses, they will rest in the assurance that the past, the present, and the future, are in the hands of Him who is perfect goodness and truth, and who will establish His Son's Kingdom on the earth." How deeply this lesson went into the hearts of the disciples, how certain they were that the coming of the

Son of Man was to be in their generation, yet how careful to warn their followers against asking after the day or the hour, we shall have to consider hereafter. Here I would only beg you to observe how our Lord strengthens His disciples' conviction that a great period or era of the world's history was coming to an end, by leading them to compare their generation with the one which had wound up another earlier period of it. "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." In the words which follow it is surely intimated that there would be precisely the same security and indifference about the crisis which was approaching as about the crisis which had occurred so long before. And yet it would be just as that was, a crisis of destruction, and a crisis of restoration, one which would show what the earth is, and what men are without God, one which would show Him forth as the ruler and renewer of it. All that follows is accurately and wonderfully descriptive of a great judgment, where one is taken and another left, the spectator knows not why or how, only he feels that there is an invisible power at work, a power which he either curses because it seems to him purely arbitrary and hostile to him, or blesses because he knows it to be righteous, and believes that its purpose is to set righteousness in the earth. It is the description, I say, of a judgment; not of a sweeping, sudden destruction, but of a searching, penetrating fire, which is sent to try men's hearts of what sort they are. All this is perfectly consistent with that belief in the revelation of an unseen Lord of the earth who should make His power and His government felt in the hearts of men and through the visible world, perfectly consistent with the appearing of the Son of Man in the glory of His Father and of the holy angels; but surely not the least consistent with the advent of a visible prince surrounded with the tinsel of ordinary outward royalty. Such an advent we might expect would be most accurately announced as to the day and the hour; the visible tokens of it would be the important and decisive ones; the secret witnesses would in comparison of them be insignificant; the command might be, "expect me, prepare for me; let some par-

ticular portion of the world be ready, for there shall I show myself." But it would not be, "Watch; for ye know not, any more than the people about you, at what hour your Lord doth come."

"Watch, therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." I am anxious to press a remark I made under the last section before I conclude my notice of this chapter, because I am well aware that the moral obstacle to the literal view of it which I have taken, is really far stronger than any other. If we suppose that our Lord actually meant that all these things would come in that generation, what has the chapter to do with us? What promises, warnings does it contain which we have not a right to set aside as mere arbitrary applications or adaptations of His words, not as addressed to us by His own lips? My answer is, I conceive the promises, warnings, commands of this chapter, will be immeasurably more weighty, more binding, more awful for us, if we believe that they did meet, not one of them but all of them, a strict accomplishment in that day. For then we shall believe that the kingdom of God has actually come with power, that it has come to us, that we are living under the shadow of it. And then the question, "how

have we used this gift, how have we behaved ourselves as subjects of this kingdom ? " will bring before us not the vague fancy of some future judgment, but the clear distinct apprehension that we must be judged, a steady consideration of any signs which show that the Judge is at the door, a direct application of our Lord's comparison between the first period of the world and the second, as a ground of judging of the third by the second. If there had been no manifestation of the Son of Man as a judge as well as a deliverer, we might well give ourselves up, as we are so apt to do, to mere fancies about a great assize, fancies which never really come home to the heart at all, which have the effect of making children afraid of their Father in Heaven, and keeping them from Him, which are cast aside by men with the rattles of infancy, which produce a certain impression through the lips of eloquent and terrific preachers upon weak nerves and sin-sick consciences ; impressions which while they last have as much evil in them as good, and which pass away, often leaving the hollowest infidelity behind. But if He has come to judgment in the most real actual manner, if the death of a whole nation, if the birth of a whole Christendom, were the proofs and are the abiding witnesses of that judgment ; if it was a judgment of the most mysterious, invisible, yet real kind, going to the roots of society, affecting all its most outward relations, meeting the individual conscience, and either raising it or leaving it in a deep abyss ; if the Christian Church was a witness to the world that was passing away of what it was meant to be and what was coming out of it, and *might* become a feeble, forgetful, false witness; then the voice of Christ as a present King, a present Son of God, speaks to individuals, nations, churches, now ; bids them watch lest their house should be broken through, lest the invisible world should be closed from them, through surfeiting and drunkenness, through party-spirit, through the worship of idols outward or inward, of self the worst of all, through the following of false prophets, through the substitution of a partial Christ for an universal one, an imaginary king for a real king ; and so when He comes to His higher and more glorious temple, He

should find it full of them who sell and them who buy, money-changers in the place of priests, mammon exalted to the throne of Jehovah; and He should decree that of this better temple too, thus defiled and abominable, not one stone should be left upon another that should not be thrown down. I have anticipated something of what I shall have to say hereafter; but the subject seemed to demand even a more solemn treatment than those which have preceded it, especially as it is the introduction to the history of the Last Supper and of the Passion.

THE PASSOVER.

"And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified. Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people." The two first of these verses belong to St. Matthew; the announcement of the consultation of the high priests is common to the three Evangelists. The great subject which is brought under our notice, both by our Lord's words and the priest's, is the passover. In the first three Evangelists (we may find afterwards how different the case is in the fourth,) the Jewish festivals do not occupy any prominent place in the other part of the narrative. The scene is chiefly laid in Galilee. If harmonists have attempted to arrange the history by the occurrence of passovers and pentecosts, we may be sure that they have sought help elsewhere than in the three stories which they were attempting to compare with each other. The purpose of the three Evangelists, it would seem, is to fix our minds upon *this* passover, to exhibit every thing as leading on towards it, and bearing upon it. He enters into Jerusalem shortly before it is to occur; the Jewish rulers have no doubt that it is His special object to present

Himself at that time to the crowds of people who were gathered together from all parts of the empire, as the Son of David, their rightful king. Some decisive blow must be struck before that time, or it may be too late. And yet no time is so dangerous; it is a sacred one; it is evident that He who entered into Jerusalem with palm-branches strewed in his way, is liked by the people, has a body of devoted disciples; He must be taken by subtlety, or there may be an uproar. Such are the thoughts simply and naturally recorded of those who ruled the Sanhedrim; the Evangelists would have us notice how all these thoughts and consultations were pointing to the connection between the passover, which was the commencement of the Israelitish deliverance and commonwealth, and the kingdom which had been declared to be at hand.

THE BETRAYAL.

I omit the story of the alabaster-box of ointment, because I do not venture to assume the identity of this event with that recorded in the seventh chapter of St. Luke. In spite of the coincidence in the name of the host, the difficulties in such a supposition are very great indeed; certainly I should not dare to surmount them for the sake of bringing out another common point in the history, nor of supplying one link in the life of Judas Iscariot. One could only do that by anticipating the narrative in the fourth Gospel, a liberty which I have determined not in any case to take. I pass therefore at once to the words in the 14th verse: "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him." St. Mark's narrative is even more brief, he omits the amount of the money. St. Luke's is a little longer, he says "Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve." I need not dwell upon the absence of all starts and exclamations in this record; that, I

hope, is a characteristic which we have become sufficiently aware of in the course of our study of these Gospels, so that to point it out is a kind of impertinence. I merely allude to it for the purpose of showing how entirely the thought of the personal friend was absorbed in the acknowledgment of the King and of the Son of God, even at the time when the most remarkable instance of his affection and familiarity was about to be related. How could men who are merely speaking of Jesus of Nazareth, their beloved friend, betrayed by one of their own circle, avoid the greatest expressions of indignation and horror? If they had only imputed to that friend in after times certain celestial attributes, how would that have hindered such utterances? Would it not have made them more natural and inevitable? What but the feeling that they were speaking of One who had absolutely no need of any such bursts of earthly vehemence or rapture, about whom they would be profane, whose history they were simply to bring out that men might know their King and deliverer, to the revelation of whom the chief priests and Judas were themselves mysteriously contributing, can account for the nakedness and seeming coldness of the narrative, when it touches upon an event which entered so deeply into the heart of Christ Himself, and the experience of which appears to have formed so deep and mysterious a part of His Passion?

THE FEAST.

"Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of

them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of Man goeth as it is written of Him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said." When one contemplates the Passover as a great national festival, binding all Israelites together, one may easily forget how much it also bore of a family character. No one can read carefully the words of the first institution without seeing how much the command, that each man should take a lamb of the house of his father, belongs to the very essence of the institution, or how much this blending of the domestic with the civil and the national goes through the whole life and history of the chosen people. Every great painter who has ventured to take the Last Supper for his subject, has left the impression upon the mind of the spectator that he is beholding a family met together with one at the head of it who holds all its members together, with one dark form in the midst of it which has broken loose from Him and is destroying its unity. This impression has been derived from the Evangelists. Nothing can be so simply and directly human and personal as the bitter words, "One of you shall betray me," and the questioning which the words produced, "Is it I?" Once lose the impression of the reality of this family meeting and we fail to see how much the feast in this upper chamber fulfilled the very idea of the Old Passover, and so we are not prepared for the next step in the story, for the carrying out of the idea of the Passover into its highest meaning and power.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood

of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives." These words, with the corresponding ones in Mark xiv. 22d to 26th verses, and Luke xxii. 19th and 20th verses, are usually said to record the institution of the Lord's Supper. This narrative is closely interwoven with the history of the Paschal Feast. The bread and wine were those which belonged to the feast. Why is it then that Christians have felt these sentences to contain the solemnest announcement of a new festival which was to be, and which actually has been, the bond of a new society, having no national or geographical limitations? Has this notion of the whole Christian world been merely a dream? How comes it that so strange a reality has, for eighteen centuries, in all the most civilized portions of the world, corresponded to it?

I can explain this fact only in one way; those who object to it may suggest some other. If beneath the Jewish kingdom there did actually lie another and a deeper one, if its national sacraments contain the idea of some more real sacrament grounded upon an actual relationship between the Son of God and human creatures, if that relationship is one of the most intimate kind which language can express, a relationship implying the closest communion of inward life, of inward love, such language as our Lord uses, however profound, would be exactly what we should look for. The connection of the new institution and the old would be involved in the nature of both; the one would succeed the other as soon as the shell could no longer contain the bird that was within it. Supposing the kingdom of our Lord to be indeed a family kingdom resting upon actual union to a divine father and a divine brother, the domestic element would be even more important to the new sacrament than to the old. Supposing, lastly, the Evangelists to be thoroughly impressed with this idea, to be penetrated by it, one might look for those few, quiet, unimpassioned sentences which record the giving of

the bread and of the cup in remembrance of Him. But this is precisely what all the previous records of these three Evangelists have been saying to us. They have been setting forth a divine kingdom, and that kingdom as established in a Son of God. The institution of the Lord's Supper therefore is in perfect agreement with every step of our previous progress, a preparation for all that is to come.

THE WARNING TO PETER.

"Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. Peter answered and said unto Him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples." The three Evangelists agree in placing our Lord's warning to Peter, "the cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice," at this point. St. Matthew and St. Mark connect it with the general words, "all ye shall be offended because of me this night." St. Luke enlarges the address to Peter, beginning with the words, "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee that he may sift thee as wheat." No one, I think, has felt any surprise at the introduction of these words immediately after the institution of the Lord's Supper, and before the Agony. It has been felt that they stood most appropriately there. And though the attempt to give a reason for any feeling of this kind is often abortive, yet there is assuredly very much plausibility at least in the commonplace that Peter, as the most affectionate and self-confident of the disciples, was warned how little he could depend upon himself, how little strong personal affection would avail him in the hour of trial. It is but an expansion of this remark to say that Peter was taught along with

the other disciples, that the feeling of family union which their meeting at the Passover had expressed and celebrated was quite insufficient to keep them together or to retain any one of them in his allegiance, that unless God were binding them by a close and mighty bond to Himself, and were upholding them in it, they could not preserve their unity. Peter was especially reminded that unless he held fast the confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and rested on Him who had revealed that truth to him, he would certainly deny Jesus of Nazareth to be his Master, however lively and energetic his attachment to Him in that character might be. Taken with the context of Peter's history, it is difficult to deduce any other moral from his acts or our Lord's words than this. But this is the consistent carrying out of the principle which we have traced everywhere, that the divine Sonship and royalty of Christ are presupposed in all His acts and utterances, are testified of by the sins and unbelief as well as by the faith and obedience of His disciples.

THE AGONY.

"Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith He unto them, My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And He went a little farther, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and said unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again:

for their eyes were heavy. And He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then cometh He to His disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me."

Every variation in the story of the Agony is deserving of the most careful observation and reflection. One part of the description in St. Luke is inseparably connected in our mind with the narrative, nay, has almost given it its name. Still, on the whole, St. Matthew is the more full and minute. The impression of anguish, of solitude, of one craving for sympathy and not finding it, is brought out perfectly by him, and the repetition of the prayer with the memorable change in it we owe especially to him. I have nothing to add to what thousands have said of it; and it is after all what has not been said of it, the unuttered, unutterable experience of human beings in all kinds and states of suffering for eighteen hundred years, which has brought out its meaning. I think I might safely leave it to that experience to declare whether the word "Father" has not been felt to contain the very essence of the sorrow and the consolation, whether if that were withdrawn the whole record would not become utterly incoherent, pervaded by a vague horror from which the heart could find no escape, and yet to which it could give no form. The intensity of the sorrow is surely in this, that it is filial sorrow, the distinct will of the Son coming forth as if it were something separate and alone, yet striving in the agony of prayer to submit itself, to claim its perfect essential unity with the Fatherly will. Who can find words except those which the Evangelists give even to indicate this conflict and this sacrifice; a sacrifice which was complete from the very intenseness of the conflict? The words must be paradoxical and contradictory which we use to denote such a struggle of life and death. Yet who does not feel that the truth which they shadow forth lies at the very root of all the feelings and sorrows of humanity, and of every individual man? Who does not feel that the very secret of

the power and life of the Gospel is lying there? No one has ever questioned that if the New Testament contains more than a few beautiful moral maxims, if it really touches upon the deepest root of man's being, the story of the Agony is the most living and inward part of it, that by which we are to understand the rest. And why is it so? Because the sonship of Christ is here more distinctly and fully revealed than even in the Temptation. Why is it so? but because the relation of Christ to all human beings, that kingly relation which we have traced through His different acts of power and mercy, is here brought out as wonderfully. He enters into the deepest experience of human sufferings. He enters into the innermost depth of that struggle of the human spirit to be independent, which is the ground of all its suffering and all its sin. He treads that wine-press alone, and there is none with Him. But He comes forth with the dyed garments of the Conqueror. Again and again one feels how miserable these attempts at commentary and elucidation are. The simple narrative contains the whole. The mind of the writer was so penetrated and possessed by the idea of the divine Son and the divine King that he could utter only the words, or a few of the words, by which the Son of God Himself had expressed it; no one Evangelist is able to take in the whole mys tery; each gives some one side or glimpse of it; their differences having, no doubt, justified themselves to the hearts and consciences of men in different stages and moods of suffering; the entire result of all belonging to the history and life of the Church universal.

THE BETRAYAL AND APPREHENSION. THE SANHEDRIM. PETER'S DENIAL.

"And while He yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed Him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He: hold Him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus,

and said, Hail, Master; and kissed Him. And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took Him. And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook Him, and fled. And they that had laid hold on Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and elders were assembled. But Peter followed Him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end. Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witnesses against Jesus, to put Him to death; but found none; yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto Him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto Him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He had spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard His blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in His face,

and buffeted Him ; and others smote Him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee ? Now Peter sat without in the palace : and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them ; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly." The corresponding passages are Mark xiv. 43d verse to the end ; Luke xxii. 47th verse to the end.

The chief variations are in the account of the act of violence to the servant of the high priest, in the story of the young man introduced by St. Mark, and in his account of the double cock crowing, when St. Peter was denying his Lord. St. Luke has placed the account of the denial before the examination of our Lord by the high priest. In the main the narratives correspond. The part of them which refers to the betrayal and the denial, I pass over, because I have already alluded to both in speaking of our Lord's prophecy at the Paschal Feast. I am anxious that the reader's mind should not be distracted by any accessary or subordinate events from considering that which was the object and the result of the apprehension ; viz. the accusation before the Sanhedrim, which is so carefully recorded by every Evangelist. "I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us if thou art Christ the Son of God ;" St. Mark says, "Again the high priest asked Him and said unto Him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the blessed One ?" St. Luke introduces other questions, but they all terminate in the one, "Art thou the Son of God ?" The answer is in St. Matthew, "Thou hast said · never-

theless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven;" in St. Mark, "I am: and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." St. Luke had introduced these words already with one important variation, "Hereafter shall the Son of Man sit on the right hand of the power of God." But they said all "Art thou then the Son of God?" and He said to them, "Ye say that I am." The decision is nearly the same in all three. St. Luke omits the rending of the clothes, but, "what need we any further witness?" is the common sentiment of the high priest and the Sanhedrim.

I have dwelt on these points because you will at once perceive how important they are in reference to the object of this lecture. The condemnation of our Lord by the Jewish nation turns, no one has ever disputed it, upon the blasphemy of His pretending to be the Son of God. With that proclamation the history began, with the effects and proof of it the history is about to wind up. But the all-important question of the high priest is met by an answer as important, as much belonging to the essence of the whole gospel. He who is the Son of God is also the Son of Man. The Son of God is about to be condemned to death, that the Son of Man may sit on the right hand of the power on high. So one part of the assertion which the gospels have been making throughout is receiving its seal. But there is also another. Another title was claimed, another charge is to be brought. They all arose, it is said, and led Him to Pilate.

CHRIST THE KING. THE ARRAIGNMENT BEFORE PILATE.

"When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put Him to death: and when they had bound Him, they led Him away, and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor ... And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked Him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou

sayest. And when He was accused of the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing. Then said Pilate unto Him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against Thee? And He answered him to never a word; inasmuch that the governor marvelled greatly. Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? For he knew that for envy they had delivered Him ... But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let Him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath He done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let Him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto Him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped Him, and put on Him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon Him, and took the reed, and smote Him on the head. And after that they had mocked Him, they took the robe off from Him, and put His own raiment on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him."

The passages I have omitted in Matthew refer to the death of Judas and the message of Pilate's wife. What is peculiar to St.

Luke is the whole story of our Lord's being sent to Herod. That which is brought out in all the three narratives is the fact that Jesus is accused, mocked, and condemned in His character of King. Pilate is not allowed to deal with the question in any other way than this; he takes all possible means to show his contempt for the charge; his insults, as well as those which St. Luke records of Herod's, are Roman jests upon the Jewish nation, partly political, for the purpose of showing how little he feared Jewish insurrection, partly the mere gratification of a conqueror's pride, partly merciful, to save the criminal from punishment by making him contemptible. There can be no doubt, I conceive, that Barabbas, though a brigand, was not merely that, but was one of those brigands who had gone forth into the wilderness in some sort as a chieftain and a Christ, pretending a divine commission to emancipate the people. The priests probably had a very cordial dislike for Barabbas as one of those insurgent leaders who interfered with their own influence over the people even far more than they shook the supremacy of Rome. The people would be surprised to hear them urging the release of one whose death had seemed certain, they would welcome it as a kind of liberal concession, and would be easily persuaded to the alternative of leaving the other victim to his fate. What the chief priests in fact said and felt was, "this is the more dangerous pretender of the two, though He may come with less violence, He is the real underminer of the throne of the Cæsars." No doubt their thoughts were very mixed. Partly they really conceived Him a blasphemer, partly they hated Him for His denunciation of themselves. They were insincere in pretending any love for Roman ascendancy; yet they believed it was safer for the nation and themselves than what might come if it were broken up. They half thought our Lord a mere impostor, they half suspected that there dwelt some mysterious royalty in Him. They could therefore easily justify their acts to themselves; there was nothing in their accusations which was in their minds directly false. The inward spiritual falsehood is what the Evangelists impute to them; their acts they

look upon as expressing and bringing out the most precious and living of all truths. Pilate they look upon as contributing his own Gentile testimony to that truth, for this was the inscription which he put upon the cross in letters of Greek and Latin and Hebrew, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews."

THE CRUCIFIXION.

"And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. And sitting down they watched him there; and set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also, the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth. Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?* that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man called for Elias. And straightway one of them ran, and took a spunge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed,

and gave him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom ; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent ; and the graves were opened ; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God. And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him." The parallel passage in St. Mark is the 15th chapter, 21st to 41st verses ; that in St. Luke is the 23d chapter, verses 26 to 49.

I have anticipated this record in my last words. There are few which I shall add to them. It will be seen that there are differences in these reports ; the story of the thief perhaps contains the most memorable to be found in the Gospels. What is it which is the same? Would not every one say ; The inscription "This is the King of the Jews," and the cry of "FATHER," whether it be, "forgive them," "why hast Thou forsaken me?" or, "into my hands I commend my spirit"? Does not the essence of the narrative lie in these? Is not the mystery of the cross in them? Shall we ever preach the cross or glory in it as the Apostles did—shall we ever understand the meaning and the coherency of the Evangelists and of all the Scriptures, till we see in it the revelation of Jesus the Son of God and the King of Men?

THE BURIAL.

"When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple : he went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had

taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre." St. Mark's record of this event is in the 15th chapter, 42d to 47th verses; St. Luke's, in the 23d chapter, 50th to 56th verses.

Whatever import we give to the words "It is finished," the Evangelist clearly do not understand them as intimating that the lowest humiliation had been reached, that the history of Christ's acts is at an end. The placing the body in the tomb by him who waited for the Kingdom of God, is in their minds a necessary part of the story; to be told quickly, like all the rest, with no pomp of words; still a fact important in itself, and a necessary step to that which will be recorded next. The quiet entombing is noticed as carefully as the violent death; the honor which is paid to the body as much as the suffering it has undergone. If it is the body merely of a departed and beloved friend, we should hear how all laws and duties were broken through and dissolved by the grief over it; if it is the body of a Son of God and King of Men, it may rest through the Sabbath-day; the tomb in the rock is a sign that the light of the world, though it seems to be quenched, is only hidden.

THE RESURRECTION.

The 28th chapter of St. Matthew, the 16th of St. Mark, the 24th of St. Luke, contain this history. What is the impression which it leaves upon every one who reads it? Surely this: that the Evangelists looked upon the Resurrection as the natural and inevitable sequel of their history. No pains are taken to show how an event so strange and unparalleled could take place; no pains to bring any weight of testimony in support of it. The incredulity of the disciples is recorded with blame; their wonder and joy without comment. St. Matthew is very brief in his narrative. Part of it is taken up with explaining the arrange-

ment between the priests and the soldiers. St. Mark speaks of our Lord's upbraiding the disciples with their hardness of heart: He asks in St. Luke, "ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" The assumption is that another issue, if you take the premises of the story, would be incredible; that this was the exact fulfilment of the Divine order, the victory over irregularity and disorder. It was not *possible* that He should be holden of death—not possible if He was the Son of God and the King of Men, not possible if His baptism, His temptation, His miracles, His parables, His whole life, were what the three Evangelists declare them to have been.

The narrative of the Resurrection belongs to the three Evangelists; that of the Ascension belongs only to two of them. Here, then, is the point at which I commence my inquiry into the peculiarities of those documents, the common ground and meaning of which I have hitherto been endeavoring to ascertain.

LECTURE I.

PART II.

DIFFERENCES OF THE EVANGELISTS.

It is the common belief respecting the Evangelists that the Spirit of God brought the facts of our Lord's life to their remembrance. They might have seen them themselves, or heard of them from others, but they did not understand them merely because they saw them or heard of them. They required some light from above to tell them what the facts meant, to bring them into harmony. Till they had this light they were not competent to record them.

This, I say, is our common belief. With it we have connected an opinion, derived from external sources or from passages of the Scripture, that each of the Evangelists was more or less intimately connected with one of the leading Apostles. No one has doubted that St. Luke was the companion of St. Paul. Common tradition, supporting itself by texts which have very considerable weight, connects St. Mark with St. Peter. We have not been wont formally to connect St. Matthew with the writer of any of the Epistles. But ancient and modern critics have agreed in considering him especially the writer for the Hebrew part of the Church. Implicitly, therefore, he is associated in our minds with St. James, the presiding Apostle of the Jerusalem Church, emphatically the Christian Jew.

I do not think people have asked themselves very distinctly how they connect these two sets of facts together. They say

vaguely that the Evangelists were inspired to report certain events. Since they find these events differently recorded, they suppose that the inspiration led to these differences ; since some events are omitted by one, and recorded by another, they suppose that this must be owing to the same cause. But they are so little in the habit of regarding these events as making up one whole, as having one distinct purpose or object, that they fail to explain to others, and, I think, to themselves, what they mean either by the human helps of eyesight or testimony, which the writers availed themselves of, or the divine guidance and superintendence which was over them.

But is it hopeless to arrive at some reconciliation of these two views ? Is any book worth any thing to any human being unless there is some idea or principle in it which binds the different facts in it together? Can a person sit down to write a book which shall last for any time, and convey a living impression to a number of minds, unless there is such an idea or purpose within it? Supposing it to be within it, will not every part of his record be penetrated by it? Will he not see every fact in the light of it ? And, so far as he imparts an impression to us, will he not do so by making us see every fact in the same light ?

Were this admitted, might we not be able better to understand what is meant by the Spirit bringing to remembrance events which had been before presented to the senses or known by testimony ? Would not the operation indicated by such language be precisely this, that all that was previously scattered, disjointed, incoherent in the mind, became a living harmonious whole ; each distinct portion brought out in its proper proportions by the light which is diffused over all ? Might we not in that way be able to understand why, amidst the number of gospels which we know to have existed in the early Church, and which St. Luke intimates to have been composed in his time, some should have sunk into immediate obscurity, some should have floated for a little while and perished at last, because they were of no living coherency, because the events which they recorded, even if they happened to be true, wanted the sure divine

impress, were felt at once not to contain a divine history, but merely the loose fragments of one.

In this way we might understand, I think, how the idea of a Son of God would be stamped upon all the true gospels, while those which were not true would be endeavoring, by various wonderful narratives and startling prodigies, to convey the notion that they had some One very great to tell of, though, with all their efforts, they could never succeed in really presenting Him to the heart and conscience of their readers. But supposing this fundamental idea were given as the common test and sign of all true Evangelists, will there have been no special aspects of that idea which presented itself to each one of them? Would it have been possible that one narrative could convey the whole of such a truth as this? Here I apprehend the opportunity occurs for considering those relations of the Evangelists with different Apostles which we have all, in some measure, taken for granted.

St. Matthew, as we have seen, at least as much as any of the three Evangelists, sets before us a Son of God in his narrative. But under what aspect? I will not now say any thing about the special work of St. James, at which I have hinted, because I shall have hereafter to examine the Epistle of St. James, and see what it tells us of his meaning and object. I will assume only that St. Matthew's Gospel is what all have called it—the Hebrew Gospel. If so, I think we might expect to find that the prevailing idea of St. Matthew's mind was that the revelation of the Son of God is the fulfilment of that revelation which we have in the Old Testament, that the new covenant is necessary to complete and substantiate the Old, that the God of Abraham must be a Father, that the kingdom of Abraham must be a fatherly kingdom.

I shall have to speak of St. Peter hereafter; I will not, therefore, enter now into the evidence which his Epistle furnishes respecting the pervading idea or purpose of his mind. I will merely recall his own confession, as given by St. Matthew, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." I turn to

St. Mark, and find his first words, "The Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God." I should expect to find that the object of St. Mark's Gospel was, emphatically, to bring out Christ in His own person and His own acts, as the head and founder of a kingdom and as an object of faith.

I shall have hereafter to go into the investigation of St. Paul's Epistles, and his position in the Church. I will only assume now that he was the teacher of the Gentiles, and that he looked upon the new dispensation, not merely as completing the old, but as having a foundation deeper than the old, so that Jewish law, and the whole Jewish economy, were grounded upon the revelation of Christ, rather than it upon them. Now I should certainly expect St. Luke's Gospel to embody this idea, to set forth the Son of God as a giver of the Spirit, and the founder of a spiritual kingdom which had an older and deeper root than Judaism itself.

Whether these expectations answer to the actual records which we find in these three Evangelists it will now be our business, as briefly as we can, to consider.

ST. MATTHEW.

CHAPTER I.

St. Matthew's Gospel opens with the words, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." It gives us a genealogy commencing from Abraham, reaching to Joseph the husband of Mary. It divides Jewish history into three periods of fourteen generations each. It tells us that Joseph was espoused to Mary, and that before they came together she was found with child by the Holy Ghost. It tells us that herein were fulfilled the words, "A virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel." It tells us that the child when he was brought forth was called Jesus.

There are here some obvious difficulties, which all readers have felt, and which cannot be evaded. I will enumerate them. Jesus Christ is said to be the Son of David and the Son of Abraham. So far we have the announcement which might be expected from a Jew, who believed that the Messiah was to be of the race of the great patriarch and the great king. But how is He proved to be so? Joseph is shown to be of that race. But Joseph is declared *not* to be His father. Secondly, What has the arrangement of Jewish history into periods to do with the genealogy or with the account of the Conception? Thirdly, supposing the miraculous Conception admitted, how was it a fulfilment of the words of Isaiah, who evidently speaks of a child then about to be born, who should not be able to cry, "My father or my mother," before the two kings who were conspiring against Ahaz should have been put down.

It does not seem to me that we escape from these difficulties by supposing the first two chapters of St. Matthew not to be a genuine part of his Gospel. For we should still have to explain how a story so apparently inconsistent was put together. Nor do I see how we are helped by supposing him to be an Ebionite Christian. For though a portion of the Ebionites believed in the miraculous Conception, it does not seem to have been a characteristic tenet of theirs, and the inconsistency will remain the same. Or, if we suppose it to be portions of two narratives, put together by some later compiler, it is quite unintelligible why he did not omit the genealogy, or try to accommodate it to the account of the conception.

Suppose, on the other hand, that St. Matthew set out from the belief which I have shown to be common to all the Evangelists, that Jesus was the eternal Son of God, would it seem to him strange that His incarnation should take place in what we call a miraculous way? Might it not seem to him, if I may use the expression, the most *natural* way in which such a Person could be brought into this world? Might he not look upon this birth as rather explaining the law of other births than being merely an exception from them? And if he had this thought, would not all Jewish history seem to confirm it to him? Take, for instance, the first in his genealogy. The birth of Isaac surely intimated to Abraham, and through Abraham to the Jewish nation, that a child is the gift of God, that where there is a human father, it is still to be attributed to Him as its author. With this first example to start from, must not the whole line of Jewish children have been regarded as witnesses of a mysterious divine paternity over the nation and over its different members? Did not every page of the prophets suggest the thought that human relations had a divine counterpart, that they were grounded upon a relation which was most real, but which had not yet been manifested? If this were his feeling, would it be strange that he should deduce his genealogy to Joseph instead of to Mary? Would not the sudden interruption of the history just at that point be the clearest explanation of the previous sequence, de-

noting that now the meaning of it was declared, that the ground of these human relations was brought to light? The words, "Son of David, Son of Abraham," would then stand in close and intelligible connection with the latter part of the story; they would intimate that the Son of God was that heir of David's throne of whom all the previous kings had been testifying, under whom they had been reigning; that the covenant with Abraham was accomplished in Him, for that in Him all the families of the earth were to be blessed.

Upon this hypothesis we might easily explain why Matthew should dwell, though but for a moment, upon the successive periods of Jewish history. He who had come to gather up the history of the people, He who was to be the centre of the different ages, is about to present Himself to us. A writer could not more significantly intimate than in this way what was to be the subject of his narrative, how the past was to be *fulfilled* in Him.

I have used the word "fulfilled," in anticipation of the next passage in the chapter. Undoubtedly one who was a virgin at the time when Isaiah spoke to Ahaz, conceived and bore a son, as we are told distinctly that the prophetess did in the eighth chapter. I apprehend that St. Matthew, so far from overlooking this fact, or its connection with the other events which befel Ahaz and the land of Israel, is especially desirous to remind us of them. He wishes us to recollect that Ahaz showed utter faithlessness in God's covenant, and that since he did so, the Lord Himself promised to give a sign which should show that the accomplishment of the promises to the house of David stood not in his faithfulness, nor in the faithfulness of that house. The sign to Ahaz that his land would be preserved, and that Samaria and Syria would be destroyed, was given. There was no disappointment, no trafficking with words in a double sense, no indefinite postponement of that which the Prophet declared would be immediate. But the meaning of the sign was not fulfilled—could not be fulfilled—unless a perfect King should actually be given to David's house, unless that King should be the Son of God. The sign itself was accomplished precisely in the sense in

which it must have been understood ; not by any departure from the ordinary rule of conception and birth, though the Prophet felt that he and his children were, from their very calling, signs and wonders of the Lord of Hosts. But when the intention was completely fulfilled, it was necessary that the sign itself should be fulfilled by an extraordinary indeed, but, as I have dared to say, by the most natural, method in which so divine, and yet so human a fact, could take place.

CHAPTER II.

Thus far, then, without departing from the supposition which is common to all interpreters, that St. Matthew was a Hebrew, and, writing to Hebrews,—only assuming that to have been his faith, which we have already ascertained by other inquiries to have been his faith,—I have arrived at what seems a consistent view of the first chapter. But if we have understood that view, especially if we have entered into his use of the word "fulfilment," the difficulties of the second chapter will, I think, not be found very serious. I confess, that either upon the ordinary hypothesis that the history is primarily the history of a human person, or upon the notion that St. Matthew was an Ebionite, or upon the hypothesis that several inconsistent narratives have been thrown into one, these difficulties seem to me quite insurmountable.

The chapter opens with the story of the visit and adoration of the Magi. This *may* be taken as one of the strange and supernatural events which attested Jesus of Nazareth to be a great prophet. But it so entirely breaks the order of the narrative, it forms such an isolated story concerning His childhood, it has so little connection with His acts or teaching as a prophet or as the founder of a religion, that I cannot wonder that those who regard Him chiefly in these characters should have been eager to throw the narrative aside. If it is thrown aside, whence did it come? Not from an Ebionite surely ; for the kingly character of the child, which is here put so prominently forward, was that which Ebionites were least disposed to regard ; and so far from

delighting to think of Him as manifested to the Gentiles, their whole labor was to prove that the New Covenant was as strictly limited as the Old. Unless the process of compilation can be explained, and the piece-work detected, it is just as gratuitous, uncritical, unsatisfactory a method of cutting a knot as the resort to a miracle ; in fact it is the *Deus ex Machinâ*, or modern indolence and superstition.

But what had St. Matthew to believe in order to make this a consistent narrative? That the God of Abraham did promise that in the seed of Abraham all the nations of the earth should be blessed. That God did promise to raise up a Son of David who should rule over the Gentiles. That the wisdom of Gentiles had been imparted to them by God. That He was the teacher and the ruler of the Gentiles. Once grant these postulates, enormous, absolutely incredible, postulates to a modern critic, but a natural inevitable part of the belief of every instructed Hebrew, and the story of the Magians becomes a perfectly reasonable one. Instead of our being called upon to believe that these Magians received some fortuitous miraculous announcement of our Lord's birth, such as was given to Habakkuk about Daniel in the apocryphal story of Bel and the Dragon, we are told that they became apprised of the birth of a King of the Jews while they were engaged in the occupation of every Eastern sage, the study of the stars. Honor is put upon laborious scientific diligence. An unseen guide is said to lead them. But the intermediate guide is a star which they have been watching—a star which they would, like all Persian astronomers, regard as a king or dynast of the earth, and would connect with some actual ruler. Such a hint is invaluable, as pointing out the nature of the preparation for the Gospel, not in the minds of one class of Gentile philosophers, but of all: in each case the subject to which he had devoted himself the most earnestly and faithfully being the means of leading him to the true King. But the story of course assumes that this Child *was* the true King ; that there *was* a divine glory in Him ; that this glory could manifest itself. We cannot avoid that assumption ; we can only say that to make it

does not involve a belief in the inconsistency of St. Matthew, but enables us to feel his consistency.

The part of this narrative which concerns Herod and the priests is entirely natural and consistent with all that we know of either. That an Edomite reigning by the choice of Antony and the toleration of Augustus, should tremble at the notion that a native prince might be at hand, we should all expect. That Herod should consult the Jewish authorities, whom he was always anxious to conciliate, and should take it for granted that an anointed king was sometime or other to be born, is perfectly in accordance with all we know of the feelings of the time. That the priests should fix upon Bethlehem, the city of David, as the birth-place of his descendant, and that they should have quoted Micah in support of their opinion, was equally to be expected. The important point in reference to this last fact is, that the Evangelists dwell so little upon the birth at Bethlehem, upon which the priests dwelt so exclusively; that they rest our Lord's claims to be received upon evidence wholly distinct from that of connection with the royal village. That the wise men should present gold and frankincense and myrrh to the infant, implies of course the previous notion of a divine King, but is in itself consistent and oriental.

Then follows the passage, "And when they were departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord, by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son." Every one has, I suppose, been puzzled by this quotation Is it not a most forced application of the words of Hosea? Can any one read him and think that any other call than that of the Jews out of Egypt was in the prophet's mind? Is he not evidently alluding to the past rather than the future? I at least cannot have any doubt that

he is. The whole context of the prophecy requires that interpretation. But do I therefore admit that St. Matthew was merely playing with the words of a writer whom he believed, whether we do or not, to have been God's prophet? Is he merely catching up a chance frivolous application of a sentence that happened to come at that moment into his memory? I apprehend the case was altogether otherwise. He looked for the fulfilment not merely of those particular words, but of the idea to which those words with their context, and with the context of the history, were pointing. Why does God call Israel His son? This was the mystery which had to be cleared up. Till it was cleared up, the history of the people, of the deliverances which God had wrought for them, of his continual paternal care and paternal chastisements, was not fulfilled. If St. Matthew regarded Jesus as the Son of God, he believed that in him this history *was* fulfilled. The actual relation of Him who had taken the seed of Abraham to God, brought out that relation of the children of Abraham to God which his acts implied, but which had not yet been made manifest. But how was it to be signified to the Israelite that this was his King, that this was He in whom God had looked upon the people amidst all their murmurings and transgressions, as his own holy family? The Evangelists held that all the acts of our Lord's life were significant, that it was not by chance that he went to Egypt instead of to any other place, not by chance that he was recalled thence. All was a part of the Divine purpose and order. Thus the life of the people was connected with the life of their king, thus Hosea's language respecting the one was interpreted by that which befel the other. Such a mode of considering the subject would be surely natural if St. Matthew had that object in view which I have supposed him to have. I do not pretend to consider it natural or intelligible if he had any other.

Then follows the murder of the infants at Bethlehem, an event which in itself requires no explanation. It is perfectly consistent with all we know of Herod's character, that he should take that course if he had any dread himself, or if he supposed any

other persons to have a hope, that an heir of the house of David was born who might supplant him. The strangeness is again in the supposed fulfilment of the words of the prophet, "In Ramah was a voice heard," etc. Upon any other principle of explanation than the one I have just adopted, Jeremiah's words must be as much distorted from their natural force as Hosea's. The mother of the Jewish race is evidently weeping there over her children, who are about to be taken captive into Babylon; she will not be comforted because they are nowhere to be found in the country of Jacob and Joseph. She is told to refrain from weeping, for her children shall come again out of the captivity; the nation will live, though so many of its inhabitants were to perish. Where are we to look for the fulfilment of the prophet's sorrow and the prophet's hope? Here is the king and deliverer, says the Evangelist, the brother, the Joseph of the family, who is to become its head, who is to preserve its life. These events of his childhood, the deaths which accompany it, his own deliverance, connect him with the history of his land; not only with its past, but with its future history; not only with the captivity which had been, but the captivity which was to be. The deaths of these children called forth the tears of a few Jewish mothers; many more Jewish mothers would weep over the loss of their children before that generation was over; Rachel would weep over the apparent extinction of her whole family; and yet as the Head of it had been saved, blessings and a higher deliverance would come out of the ruin. Such a view of the text as this, of course presumes a belief in the organic life of the nation, in a vital connection between all the different portions of its history. But I ask, whether it is possible to read the Old Testament without perceiving that this feeling pervaded the mind of every legislator and prophet? I ask whether, if the New Testament performs its promise of explaining the Old, it must not take us into the very heart of this mystery, and show us the centre to which all the different lines we trace through these records were converging?

Once more, we are told that Joseph found Archelaus reigning

when he returned from Egypt, that he feared therefore to go into Judæa, that he turned aside into the parts of Galilee, and went and dwelt in Nazareth ; so the words of the Prophets were fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene." In the two former cases we had no difficulty in detecting the passage which was referred to, however we might be puzzled by the application of it. Here we are at fault as to the quotation itself. "It was spoken by the *prophets*," says St. Matthew ; we are not therefore to expect that we shall find the words in any particular prophet ; the Evangelist must refer to some general meaning which he traces through all of them, and which this sentence, whether it exists in that form or not, aptly embodies. Looking at the actual reputation of Nazareth as it is indicated so many times in the Evangelists ; looking at the argument from his dwelling in Galilee, which was so decisive with the Jews against his title to be accounted a king ; looking at all that was intimated by the word "Nazarene," when it was bestowed upon the disciples, I cannot but suppose that the simplest interpretation of the words is the most accurate ; that the Evangelist thinks of all such passages in the prophets as indicate that the coming king and prophet should be like past kings and prophets, like the nation itself of which he was the head, despised and rejected ; none seeing his comeliness, none being able to declare his generation. In this way the passage is in keeping with all that precede and follow it, and explains, better than almost any other, what St. Matthew understood by the accomplishment of prophecy.

CHAPTER III. IV.

We come now to a part of St. Matthew which we have considered already. The peculiarity in his account of the baptism is, that he introduces the words, "But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now : for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." I do not know

that there is any thing in these words which assists us in determining the object of this Evangelist, but it is at least curious that the Ebionite gospel should be the one into which the assertion of our Lord's superiority to John is introduced. At the same time, the words "fulfilling righteousness" have a specially Jewish sound and character, and they interpret the other uses of the word *fulfilled*, to which we have just adverted.

The righteous man of the Old Testament was the man whom the righteous God chose and set apart to Himself, the man who believed in God, and to whom God's righteousness was imputed. *He* fulfilled his righteousness who submitted to the calling of God through whatever voice it came, who submitted to every ordinance of God as the signification of His mind and will. This is evidently implied in the words; it is surely consistent with the previous passages that something more should be implied, viz. that the righteousness of the law was now fulfilled or accomplished in a person, and that His baptism was the proof that it was. The Son submits to the servant that He may be declared to be the Son. This idea so pervades the Gospel that it presents itself unawares at every turn of the narrative.

The order of the temptations in St. Matthew is different, as all have observed, from that in St. Luke. The offer of the kingdoms of the world in the first Gospel follows, in the third precedes, the invitation to cast Himself from the pinnacle of the temple. Others have refined upon this difference more than I wish to do; though I cannot help feeling that there is a meaning in it; not one thrust into it by the writer, but springing naturally from the purpose and habit of his mind. The characteristic temptation of the Jew was to cast himself from the ground upon which God had placed him, from His covenant and worship, into the idolatries of the nations round about; the characteristic temptation of the Gentile, and of those who belonged to the new dispensation, has been to seek universal dominion by paying homage to the Evil Spirit.

After the temptation, begins the history of the preaching of our Lord. He goes down, says St. Matthew, into "the borders

of Zabulon and Nephthalim : that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Esaias, saying, the land of Zabulon," &c. The connection of this passage with the general prophecy of Isaiah, I should conceive was this : Just at the time when the dimness and darkness of the land of Judæa is greatest, through the idolatries of Ahaz, just at the time when the destruction of the ten tribes is consummated, a great light appears in the land, a king is raised up who rules in righteousness. Hezekiah does not feel himself only a Jerusalem king : the whole land is God's land ; He invites those to come up to the great passover who had been separated from Judah ever since the time of Jeroboam. Even to the furthest corners of the land, to the very borders of the Gentiles, his gracious sovereignty extends ; these remote people feel once more that they are under the divine government. The language of Isaiah in speaking of this great coming change is not exaggerated. It is not easy to exaggerate the difference between the influence of a sensual tyrant, or an utter anarchy, and the sway of a king who feels that he is raised up to show forth God's rule over his subjects. St. Matthew has the whole passage present to his mind. The king is the central object in it. The particular words respecting Zabulon and Nephthalim express how his power pervaded the whole land and reached to the furthest limits of it ; these therefore are the words which are said to be fulfilled in that visit to Galilee of the Gentiles, as a sign that the whole was fulfilled in the true and perfect King. The fulfilment is therefore literal. The poor inhabitants of that region, as wretched, probably, in the days of Herod and of Roman ascendancy—as morally dark—as at the time of the first captivity, actually felt the presence of a Divine teacher and deliverer,—of a King. But the fulfilment to them is the sign and witness of the fulfilment of the prophecy to the whole nation, and through the nation to mankind. The universal is seen in the individual, according to the Scripture method, which is also the method of nature, the method of the reason, in short, the divine method in all its manifestations.

CHAPTERS V. VI. VII.

I shall not now enter into the question whether the Sermon in the sixth chapter of St. Luke, is, or is not, to be identified with the Sermon on the Mount. But I shall point out the great pervading difference between them, which every one who studies them with the least attention will perceive. The words, "I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil," have nothing corresponding to them in the sixth chapter of St. Luke. But the whole of the comparison between what had been said in old time and what our Lord spoke then, begins with these words and evidently turns upon them. I conceive that the whole discourse in St. Matthew must be interpreted by reference to these. And if we do so interpret it, we shall be more and more struck with *the* difference which our Lord points out between the age which had preceded Him and that which He was come to establish. He has carefully told us that He has come to destroy nothing. The least commandment would still be precious. Why then should the contrast seem to be so great? The last verse in the fifth chapter explains the ground of it. "Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." This is the fulfilment which you trace throughout the whole chapter. The name "Father," is one which recurs at every turn, which forms the ground of every sentence. Compare any chapter of Leviticus with this, "I am the Lord," "I the Lord am in the midst of you." This is the continually repeated formula, this was the ground of that which was said by them of old time. Great and wonderful words they were, words that could not pass away. This is the everlasting foundation of a Decree. There can be no other. But our Lord uttered no decrees. He revealed the actual mind of God, and showed how that mind was intended to become, and could become, the mind of men; for it was the mind of His Father, and He was come to them as a brother. Take this idea away from the Sermon on the Mount, and you do not merely

destroy its unity ; you destroy the sanction and the intelligibility of every one of its separate utterances. You cannot make out why a man should not pray in the corners of streets to be seen of men ; you cannot make out why he should not do his alms before men to be seen of them ; you cannot make out why he should not take thought for the morrow ; you cannot make out why he should ask and hope to receive. "Your Father seeth in secret ; your Father knoweth you have need of these things ; if ye being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, shall not your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask Him? Here we have the only explanation which our Lord thinks right to give.

I shall not go step by step through this great discourse. The hint which I have given will be sufficient for any one who wishes to investigate the subject more carefully ; I am sure he will have a rich reward, and that he will be able to tell me innumerable things which I have not observed, which illustrate the Evangelist's meaning more fully, perhaps, than those which I have set down

CHAPTER VIII.

I would remark upon this chapter that St. Matthew introduces into the story of the healing of the centurion's servant, "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness : there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." That St. Matthew should go out of his way, as it were, to record sentences of this kind, is inexplicable upon the hypothesis that he was especially jealous, as every Ebionite was, of the intrusion of Gentiles into the covenant. Such passages therefore must be treated by those who hold that hypothesis, as the interpolations of a later compiler. Why he should choose St. Matthew as the special object of his experiments, does not appear. On the other hand, if St. Matthew were writ-

ing as a Hebrew to Hebrews, nothing would be so natural as that he should dwell upon the evidence that in them and their seed the other nations were to be blessed, or that he should warn them, as the prophets of old did, how near they were to desolation and apostasy. Such must have been the continual tone of St. James's preaching to his fellow-citizens at Jerusalem. The difference between his and St. Paul's was, as we shall find hereafter, very decided and remarkable ; but it did not consist in the fact that one was more tolerant of the sins of the Jews than the other, or believed less than the prophecies respecting the Gentiles were to be accomplished. Nor is this the nature of the contrast between St. Matthew and St. Luke. Their admonitions respecting the coming calamities on the Jewish nation are in many respects curiously distinguished. But it is a distinction of kind, not of degree. If there is any difference, St. Matthew is the more earnest and frequent in his warnings, because, as one treating of the fulfilment of prophecy, this was obviously part of his province.

An instance of prophetical fulfilments occurs in this passage. "When the even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils: and He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." As it has been so much the habit of commentators to restrict the meaning of these words to the death of our Lord, most readers, I suppose, feel a little startled when they find this application of them by an Apostle and an Evangelist. Surely St. Matthew understood the prophet at least as well as we do. The healing sicknesses and casting out devils seemed to him to involve bearing sicknesses and infirmities. Only He who suffered them could remove them. His power to relieve the woes of humanity could not be separated from His participation in them. Christ's brotherhood with man answered to all the anticipations which prophets had formed of their king. Without it there could have been no fulfilment of God's promises or man's cravings.

CHAPTER IX.

I have already commented on the passage in this chapter which refers to the feast in Matthew's house, and to the reason for the disciples of John and the Pharisees fasting while the disciples of Jesus did not fast. The peculiarity in the narrative of St. Matthew is that he introduces the words, "Go ye, and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." This allusion, slight as it is, opens a very wide view of the nature of the old economy, as well as of the new. The tendency of the Jewish worshipper was always to fancy that his sacrifices were buying God's mercy. The continual teaching of the Law and the Prophets is, that the mercy was itself the ground of the sacrifices. Instead of contradicting, then, the meaning of the Old Law by showing mercy to those who were not righteous, He was fulfilling it. He was carrying out the mind of God towards men; He was exhibiting Him as the Author of forgiveness, of deliverance, of righteousness to men. Observe how naturally this pervading feeling of the Evangelist's mind expresses itself in all his quotations; how, at every turn in his Gospel, our Lord is bringing out the mind of the God of Abraham, and showing it to be the mind of a Father.

CHAPTER X.

I have remarked already that the directions to the Apostles are given much more in detail by St. Matthew than by the other Evangelists, and especially that St. Luke transfers to the seventy much of what St. Matthew sets down with reference to the twelve. Supposing that St. Matthew designed to show the fulfilment of the Old Dispensation in the New, and St. Luke to be the teacher of the Gentiles, I think that we should certainly have expected this difference.

The apostolic office, with all its largeness and catholicity, is

the unfolding or fulfilment of the tribe institution. It represents the Jewish nation, while it makes that nation what it was always meant to be, the teacher and evangelizer of the world. The directions in this chapter clearly belong to them first in their character of teachers of the lost sheep of the House of Israel, to whom, on their first mission, they were to confine themselves, though every warning and exhortation looked on to a subsequent period, when their office should be unlimited. That characteristic of the Evangelist, which I noticed in the last chapter, is here very prominent: "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." Here we have the special ground of the Apostles' faith and consolation. In that name Father also, as I believe, lay the foundation of their office. It was that which by their acts, as well as their words, they were continually to be setting forth.

CHAPTER XI.

St. Matthew and St. Luke both record the coming of John's disciples to Christ, and the conversation which followed after they were gone. There is one passage* in the latter which is peculiar to St. Matthew: "And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come." In the account of the Transfiguration St. Matthew tells us that our Lord said, "Elias had already come, and that the people had done to him what they listed; and that the disciples then understood that He spake of John the Baptist:" He is the only Evangelist who directly identifies them. St. John, in a passage which I shall have to consider hereafter, seems to say that the Baptist himself disclaimed the name of

* The two preceding verses "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven," &c., are not introduced by St. Luke into this conversation; but in the 16th verse of the 16th chapter there are words very nearly resembling them. Their bearing upon the subject of John the Baptist will be understood from the remarks in the text.

Elias. It will be seen at once how entirely it is in accordance with the purpose I have traced in St. Matthew to dwell upon this point. All the announcements, principles, ideas of the old economy were to be fulfilled in the new. The advent of Christ was to substantiate the indications in Jewish history and Jewish prophecy. Elijah, who had proclaimed the Lord God of Abraham in the face of Jezebel and her priests and her idols, must have his counterpart before the Jewish age was wound up. There must be a protester for the Lord God of Abraham against the heart-idolatries, the fleshly worship, of Pharisees and Sadducees, a witness that He was indeed manifesting Himself, that a great Day of the Lord was come. The Evangelist never, I think, for a moment ceases to think of our Lord as the revealer of the mind of that God for whom Elijah had testified; as fully declaring His righteousness, and His judgments.

There is one memorable passage before the end of this chapter which belongs solely to St. Matthew. It is that which taught St. Augustine the difference between the teaching of Christ and that of the best philosophers: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The words are sufficiently beautiful if they stood alone, unconnected with the passage immediately preceding, which occurs without them in the tenth chapter of St. Luke. But Augustine can never have separated them from that sentence. The heavy burden upon his soul was the sense of ignorance of God and of separation from Him. The philosophers could awaken this sense, but could not satisfy it when it was awakened. He who could say that He knew the Father, and was willing to reveal Him, could say, "Come unto me, I will give you rest." And He could then call upon them to take His yoke, to work with Him in his Father's Kingdom, to become a son lowly and obedient as *the* Son was; so to cast off the heavy oppression of pride and self-will. A soul crying out for the living God, could understand that language. Those who had entered into the cries of the psalmist and prophets of old, could understand and may understand still, how Christ responded to them and fulfilled them.

CHAPTER XII.

This chapter gives us another instance of the kind which we have considered so often before. "And Jesus withdrew Himself from thence: and great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all; and charged them that they should not make Him known: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon Him, and He shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, until he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust."

I will ask any one seriously to meditate on this application of Scripture by St. Matthew, and to ask himself what idea the person who made it must have had of fulfilment.

No one, I think, will dare to say that it is inappropriate. The heart and the conscience at once recognize the most wonderful propriety in it. One who refused to let His deeds of love and mercy be known, who had power to heal multitudes, and had power to reject the fame of healing any, is just the kind of person whom Isaiah describes. This feature of his character implied a number of others. He must have been inwardly and throughout meek and lowly. That meekness, instead of interfering with his power, must have been a main element of it. But analyze the passage in Isaiah after the manner of a modern prophetical interpreter. What becomes of it? What has "showing judgment to the Gentiles" to do with healing the sick in Galilee? What has "sending forth judgment unto victory" to do with commanding sick people not to make Him known? How should "Gentiles trust in his name" because He told Jews not to proclaim it? If just that incident had to be fitted to some special prediction, a hundred might have been chosen that would

have matched more exactly. Not many could have been found so wide of the point. Only if we suppose that this Person fulfilled the whole description of royalty and gentleness which the prophet had sketched, only if we suppose the Evangelist to have felt in that one act, how the whole divine, human portrait of the prophet, was embodied in a living man, only if we go along with Him in saying, "such a one as this, only such a one as this, so human, so divine, can rule the nations, can be an object of trust to all nations," shall we enter in the slightest degree into the intention of the words, or be able to acquit them of frivolity.*

CHAPTER XIII.

The 13th chapter contains two of the parables upon which I have commented already, with two or three which are peculiar to St. Matthew. It is curiously in accordance with all we have found in him thus far, that though our Lord, both in St. Mark and St. Luke, uses the words "that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand," St. Matthew alone gives the quotation from Isaiah, introducing it with the phrase, "in them is fulfilled the prophecy." Again, at the 34th verse he

* There is a passage in this chapter which I have not spoken of, because I do not understand it. It is that in which it is said, "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." As there were not three days and three nights between the crucifixion and the resurrection of our Lord, these words clearly cannot bear the interpretation which is commonly given to them. But I do not see of what other interpretation they are susceptible. Therefore I leave them. I shall do so with any other passages which I feel puzzling in the same manner. I hope every one will reject any interpretations of mine which seem to them strained and artificial. I hope I shall not cling to any of them merely because they are mine and have seemed plausible to me. The more I read the Bible and believe it, the deeper is my sense of the fearful sin of sacrificing truth in the slightest degree, for the sake of making out a case in favor of it. God has confounded many such tricks which have been resorted to in support of His cause. May He confound mine if I have committed what I know must be a more grievous offence in His eyes than many open professions of doubt or unbelief.

says, "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake He not unto them: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." Any one who will consider either of these quotations, will perceive the absolute necessity of bringing them under the law which we have found applicable to all previous ones. To suppose that Isaiah did not refer to the grossness in the minds of the people in his own day, would be to make the awful vision of the Lord of Hosts which He saw in the Temple, and the mission which followed it, a mere mockery. If the writer of the 78th Psalm was not himself going to utter and explain parables and hard sentences, what is the Psalm about? But Isaiah's prophecy was not *fulfilled* in his generation; the hardness of heart had not reached its climax, the eyes had not yet been closed against the perfect light which might be poured into them. The Psalmist dwelt upon the parables of his country's history, uttered the dark sayings concerning God's dealings with them which their fathers had told them; he was able to see those dealings in their connection, and so to remove part of the veil which covered them while they could only be viewed separately and in progress. But it was only the perfect Image of God, who could set forth fully the parable of his relations with man, who could exhibit His acts in perfect order and sequence.

Now these two quotations remarkably illustrate, I think, that particular aspect of the parable which St. Matthew presents to us. Its general object, as we have seen, is to bring out the inward order of God's kingdom and government over the heart and will of man, with its outward results, as these are illustrated by other parts of His kingdom and government in nature or in the common transactions of men with each other. The special calling of St. Matthew seems to be, to show us the working of the divine power and influence side by side with the working of those powers and influences which counteract it, and the approach of a crisis which would distinguish and separate them.

Thus the parable of the tares of the field is St. Matthew's. The leaven which the woman hid in three measures of meal, which recent commentators, with so much justification from the uniform use of the word "leaven" in Scripture, have taken to indicate the mixture of an evil and corrupt principle with the pure seed in Christian life and doctrine, is also his. It is he again who speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven as like a net which was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind. So that his comparisons seem especially to bear upon that complete working out of the mystery of good and the mystery of evil, which is indicated by the phrase, "end or accomplishment of the age."

I can scarcely help seeing this character, where it is less obvious, in the other two beautiful parables of this chapter, that of the treasure hid in the field, and of the merchantman seeking goodly pearls. The first surely describes the wonder and delight of those who had been all their life seeking for signs and outward things, when they found the treasure they needed close to them; that the field which they had never cultivated, nay, which they had need to buy as a strange possession, was that of their own hearts. And does not the other describe as livingly, those old philosophers who were really searching for goodly pearls, for shattered portions of divine and true wisdom, and who found all these fragments gathered up into one living Person?—parables which, though they may have various and infinite personal applications, yet belong remarkably to the history of that age, to that conflux of Jewish and Gentile faiths as well as unbeliefs, which was to mark the winding up of it.

CHAPTERS XIV. XV. XVI.

I do not know that there is any thing in these chapters upon which I have not spoken already, or which is peculiar to St. Matthew, except the incident of Peter being called to come to Jesus on the water, and the memorable words to the same Apostle: "Upon this rock will I build my Church; and the gates of

hell shall not prevail against it." The last subject alone seems to be important: I need not say how important it is.

The blessing to Peter is the point in this passage to which all Romanists would draw our attention, and they are right. All the rest of the passage depends upon that blessing. Let us consider what it is. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." To know that Jesus Christ was the Son of the living God, was to know a truth which God only could make known to a man, a truth not for his flesh, but for his spirit, belonging not to the surface of his mind, but to its very ground. This is just what we should have concluded from our previous inquiries. The discovery of the Son of the living God is the discovery of Him upon whom all things and all persons rest. All his miracles and all his parables have been proving this. He had fulfilled the meaning of the old Jewish kingdom, by coming forth as that Prince and Head of it who had been secretly directing all its movements, who had been implied in all its offices.

How beautifully do the next words accord with these: "My Father in heaven has revealed to you that ground which flesh and blood could not make known to you, the ground upon which your own life and all men's lives stand. And upon *this* rock will I build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." If the blessing to Peter had not preceded, we might have been in doubt about the meaning and nature of this rock. We might have said with the Romanists, "it means St. Peter himself," or with a great many Protestants, "it means a dry, formal confession." But these are just what flesh and blood *could* reveal. A certain man, the head of a school or college of Apostles, a certain logical formula declaring Jesus to be the Son of God, belongs to the surface of men's minds. But to teach a man that he can only rest upon the pillars of the universe, can only rest upon the Son of God Himself, this is God's work. A man who apprehends this, knows that he is standing, not upon a shifting sand, but upon an eternal rock.

"Upon it," says our Lord, "will I build my *Church*." The

word *Ecclesia* has not yet occurred in the New Testament. It only occurs twice in the Gospels. That it should be used both times by St. Matthew may seem strange, considering that the word is so especially Pauline. But be it always remembered, that if it has a very close connection with the so-called Gentile dispensation, its force and application must be entirely learnt from the Jewish Scriptures. The apostle of the Gentiles found the phrase in use in the Greek cities, and applied to an assembly called together by a herald. But he took it in its etymological sense. It was a body called out. In that sense it was expounded by the whole history of the Jewish nation, by the calling out of the first father of the family, of the nation, of every officer and man in the nation. How strictly was it in accordance with all St. Matthew's previous teaching, to intimate that a body called out which these limits could not confine or ascertain, was to be built up in the world, and that a rock lying deep down was to be the foundation of it. Against a building so established the gates of Hell could not prevail. It could not sink and be lost in the abyss of darkness and death, for it stood upon One who would show that death and hell had not the power to hold Him.

Now that Peter should have the keys of this Kingdom of Heaven, that it should be given to him to open the gates of this Church, and to admit Gentiles as well as Jews into it, might seem very wonderful; but it is just what the history tells us. When he preached on the day of Pentecost, when he preached to Cornelius, this honor was conferred upon him. In the strictest sense, I conceive that which he bound on earth was bound in heaven, and that which he loosed on earth was loosed in heaven. I do not purpose to enter into the consideration of these last words, as they will meet us again in another chapter of this Gospel. But I will say, first, that I do not shrink on the strength of them and of the rest of this passage, from attributing to St. Peter a greater privilege and glory than that claimed for him by those who give him such a position on the earth or in the unseen world, as would prove that the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven had *never* been opened to men by him or by any other; NB

secondly, that I am ready to test St. Peter's own position, and his Master's, by the view which he takes of both in his own epistle

CHAPTER XVI.

This chapter contains one passage which is peculiar to St. Matthew, the account of the tribute-money which was demanded of Peter, and of the way in which he was desired to procure it. It would be a natural thought, that St. Matthew's position as a publican led him to repeat this story. But the conclusion would be a rash one; for it has been often and rightly remarked, that the didrachma was not a payment to the Roman government, but for the expenses of the Temple, and that the force of the question to St. Peter: "Of whom do the kings of the earth take tribute?" turns upon this circumstance. They were the children of Him who dwelt in the Temple, not strangers, or bondsmen. According to this interpretation, St. Matthew would be the Evangelist most likely to introduce such a conversation; it would accord with the whole purpose of his narrative; it would be a new illustration of the way in which our Lord came to fulfil all the purpose of the old dispensation, to substantiate the meaning of its forms, institutions, holy places. I am not sure that I see the special meaning in the miracle of the fish which some have been disposed to give it. I see in it that general claim of our Lord over the realms of nature, which He had in so many ways asserted. I can understand its force in connection with the draught of fishes, and with other acts of the same kind; but it may have one or many significations which I am not able to perceive. Those who value it simply because it seems to them an act of a more startling kind than others which they read of, must consider with themselves whether they will explain all the miracles by this, or this by them.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I remarked in a former page, that the narrative of the conversation with the disciples which was suggested by their question, "Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" was more varied and embraced more topics in St. Matthew's Gospel than in either of the others. The little child is common to all. That which is peculiar to St. Matthew is the earnest warning respecting scandals, the memorable sentence, "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven," and the sentence, "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." No one can fail to see how the first topic is suggested by the Apostle's question and dispute. Just the temper which they had been exhibiting, the desire for high places, the notion that offices were prizes for ambition, not services, would, in one form or other, be the cause of all the scandals in Christ's kingdom. But where lay the test of its existence, as well as the correction of it? The little child, the humblest human creature, was dear to His Father in heaven. He did not look upon it merely as a fallen corrupted thing. Its Angel, its pure original type, that which it was created to be, was ever present with Him, was ever looking up into His face. To bring it to this state was His will. It was against His will that one such little creature should lose its high and original glory. For the Son of Man was come to seek and to save that which was lost, to fulfil His Father's will, by bringing back into the circle of His holy flock the one sheep that had wandered out of the way. How fearful then those scandals which injured any of those little ones! How needful to cut off the right hand, and pluck out the right eye which caused them!

Hence the transition is easy to the great law, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." Here is the great law of the family, the great means

of checking the scandals which spring up in it. But Christ, the Son of God, the elder Brother of the human race, has come to establish this principle of the family, to make it the universal principle. Here then is the second occasion on which St. Matthew introduces the word *Ecclesia*. Before we were told of the foundation upon which it rested, now of the principles of its cohesion and of the powers which are threatening it. It is held together by a law of forgiveness and mutual sacrifice. Only when that law has been resisted and renounced by any person utterly and in defiance of all warnings and manifestations of love, is his brother warranted in casting him off, in treating him as the proud scornful Jew treated heathen men and publicans.

Then come in the words, "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." Surely in our disputes about the powers which may or may not be conveyed in the first of these sentences to the priests of God, we have overlooked the radical and characteristic principle of the passage; the assertion that heaven and earth had been brought by the Son of man under one law, that earth was to have really a kingdom of heaven in the midst of it. Here I find the true exposition of the power and reality of the Church, one for which the notion of certain keys put into the hands of a mortal man, or a number of mortal men, would be a miserable substitute. The two clauses should be surely taken together, and taken in conjunction with the whole previous passage. Then they will illustrate the deep mystery of human creatures being adopted as sons of God, by being acknowledged as brothers of Christ, and so being enabled to be perfect as their Father which is in heaven is perfect; the very mystery of the Sermon on the Mount, and which it seems to be St. Matthew's special function to expound.

Nowhere has he expounded it more strikingly than in the concluding parable of this chapter, that of the king taking an

account of his servants. The grand truth that God's forgiveness is the ground of man's forgiveness, and that God's forgiveness, free, large, absolute as it is, only reaches a man's heart when it subdues his unbrotherly nature and makes him forgiving—a truth of which we are all most imperfectly conscious, and which we are setting at naught continually by our theories, as much as we forget it in our practice.

CHAPTERS XIX. XX.

There is nothing in the next chapter of which I have not spoken already. But the concluding passage in it is inseparably connected with the parable in the twentieth, which is peculiar to St. Matthew. The importance of that parable as declaring the nature of the divine kingdom, and of its rewards, cannot be overrated. St. Peter had proved, as I remarked before, that the temptation of the rich man is in another form the temptation of the poor. "What shall we have therefore" was the thought of the Apostle as well as of the ruler. "Every thing," is the answer, gifts beyond your imagination; but this is the greatest: To understand that your calling and your work are themselves inconceivable blessings, and that *the* blessing which follows upon them, the hire at the end of the day, is one of which you are not to be possessors, but sharers. If you look upon it as something which you are to "have," and from which others are to be excluded for your sake, you will never know what it is; the nature and meaning of my Kingdom will be hidden from you. And why? Because the ground of that kingdom is the will of a Father whose eye is good, who sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust. To be like Him, to enter into His mind, is *the* good; this is that which the chosen seek; those who fancy themselves chosen to the injury of their brethren are only called. What a lesson to the elect nation! What a deeper, more awful lesson to the elect Church!

CHAPTERS XXI. XXII.

In the 21st chapter St. Matthew introduces into the conversation with the chief priests and elders respecting the authority of John the words: "But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Whether of the twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him."

These words I think are characteristic of the Evangelist. The Will of a Father; submission to it or resistance to it; the repentance which acknowledges *it* to be good and the child's will to be evil; this is the subject of our Lord's revelations as they presented themselves to his mind. The other aspects of the gospel are not lost, but they are contemplated in reference and subordination to this one. In this way it is the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets, though it may lead to the casting out of those who boasted most of the Law and the Prophets. The remark is particularly applicable here because the 21st chapter generally records precisely those discourses and parables which we find in the other Evangelists.

The parable in the opening of the 22d chapter, "the King making a marriage for His Son," concludes with the same moral as that in the 20th chapter, "For many are called, but few chosen." And surely it does most remarkably expand and develope the idea of the previous story, though the occasion which suggested it, the persons to whom it is addressed, and the scenery of it, are

so different. The great reward which the Father bestows upon men is that they should come and rejoice with Him in the marriage of His Son. His bridal with humanity is that which expresses and fulfils the mind and will of the Creator; this it is which unites and reconciles him to His creature. To give thanks for this is to become like Him, to enter into the joy of the Lord. The refusal of those to do this who were first invited because their hearts were set upon special possessions, occupations, enjoyments of their own, the calling of the most wretched and helpless who had nothing of their own, the determination of some even of these to appear in their own ragged clothing, rather than to receive the wedding-dress, explain the nature and root of the evil in man, that evil of which the Jewish pride, distrust, exclusiveness, were the great exemplifications in that day, but which belonged equally to the Gentiles, and would be manifested in them when they were endued with the same privileges. I do not doubt for a moment that the parable belongs to that class of discourses which our Lord spoke after His entry to Jerusalem, and which bore so directly upon the sins of its rulers. But this specific character does not hinder it from possessing a universal character arising from the very nature of the subject, or an individual character arising from the distinct purpose of the Evangelist who records it.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The specific, the universal, and the individual, all appear in the tremendous chapter which follows. Those who think of our Lord's words as the announcement of a more benignant, more tolerant dispensation, than that which preceded it, are utterly scandalized by the denunciations which they read here. How can we reconcile them, they ask, with the tone and spirit of the Sermon on the Mount? They are in the most literal and in the most inward harmony with the Sermon on the Mount. "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and

Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." This was the maxim of that discourse. Now we are told, with the same authority which pronounced that sentence, what the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees is. If Jesus did not speak as a king and lawgiver, then the tone of this discourse is new and strange. But the feeling of the people who heard Him when he opened His lips, and said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," was that He did speak as a King and Lawgiver, as one who knew the very mind of God, and could reveal it. And if so, he implicitly declared there what he explicitly declares here, that all religion which is not based upon that eternal Mind of God, upon truth and righteousness, let it be as seemly as it may in the sight of man, let it clothe itself in what phrases of godliness it pleases, is atheistical, and must be swept away. "It cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." The kingdom rests upon a Revelation of the eternal Will and Order of God; all who will confess that Will and Order are invited to share its blessedness; all who will set up themselves upon any pretext must be aliens from it. The Pharisaic religion was the enthronization and deification of self; that which was the evil of the world scattered through many forms was concentrated in them; it stood face to face with Christ, who came to offer Himself as a Sacrifice; it denied not the Son of Man, but the Holy Spirit which dwelt in Him. Our Lord here, in awful language, describes its signs, and announces its downfall. The age which these Pharisees represented would gather up into itself the crimes and sins of all past ages; against it, the final sentence, long delayed, would go forth.

Hereby we see how these woes belong to the time which is assigned for them, how they accord with the parables which precede, and the prophecy which follows them. We see also how everlasting the truth is which is brought out for the condemnation of the rulers of a particular nation. A selfish religion, adopting the names and forms of a religion grounded upon self-sacrifice, must be the imminent sign of any people's misery and perdition; all its other evils must have their root and their con-

summation in that. But nowhere more than while he is thus following the course of the history and showing forth its perpetual application, does St. Matthew perform his own distinct function. The denunciations of our Lord are the fulfilment of all the denunciations of former prophets; the execution of them would be the fulfilment of all past judgments. The establishment of His kingdom would be the fulfilment of all those reformations and restorations which had cheered the ancient seer under the overwhelming sense of the sins of the people and its rulers, under the prospect of approaching captivity and desolation.

CHAPTERS XXIV. XXV.

I have commented very largely upon the next chapter. I have only to ask that you would read it once more in connection with the one I have just considered, and with the 25th.

That chapter begins with the words, "*Then* shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom." I must take the "then" literally, and determine it according to the prophecy respecting the Temple. "Then when the tribulation of these last days comes, when Jerusalem is compassed about with armies, when the abomination of desolation is set up in the holy place—shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins." And thus, I think, we gain from the parable a new light upon the words which have caused so much perplexity in the prophecy. The coming of the bridegroom in the one is, of course, identical with the coming of the Son of Man in the other. The King has made a marriage for His Son. He comes to claim his bride. If the passing away of the Old Dispensation meant this; if the shaking not of earth only, but also of heaven—not of polities alone which claimed a human origin, but of one which claimed, and had a right to claim, a divine origin—was a proof that the Son of Man had come to assert His fellowship with humanity, we can understand why the day and hour of His coming should be unknown,

why He should be said to come as a thief in the night, even though the outward tokens of His judgment should be most startling and conspicuous, though the effects of it should be apparent through all ages to come.

And this is just what the parable of the virgins seems to intimate. The kingdom of heaven—the divine society—would resemble ten virgins, five of whom were wise, and five were foolish. Most commentators, I believe, have supposed these virgins to be churches; few have doubted that the oil means here, as elsewhere, the Spirit, or the spiritual life. Moreover there is much uniformity in the interpretation of the story as denoting that certain churches would have the general outward preparations for Christ's coming, scriptures and ordinances as lights to their feet; and that some sudden convulsion having startled them into the belief that His coming was near, they would all begin to trim these lamps, to feel the necessity of using them for the purpose for which they were given; but that the foolish would then discover their incapacity for using them, and would be eager for all second-hand helps; would at last be forced to the discovery that unless they went to them that sold, and bought for themselves,—unless they had a direct personal apprehension of Him in whom they professed to believe,—they could not meet Him. I believe I am not departing in the least from the ordinary rubric of commentators when I adopt this explanation. All I wish is that it should be brought out more distinctly in connection with the leading idea of the bridegroom. And then I think that the sense of it will be that certain churches would be really waiting for the divine King who had declared Himself as the root of humanity, as the ground of their personal and their social life, as the only bond of their unity, and would therefore find Him in the truest, most living sense, not as their King only, but as the Lord of Man; that the others, expecting some mere outward exhibition of Him, such as the adulterous Jewish generation sought after, would find that they had grasped a shadow, would lose what they had possessed before, would become apostate. "Verily I say unto you, I know you not." The five virgins would become parts

of the new and living Jerusalem ; the others would sink into the corrupt mass of Judaism or heathenism. Such would be the specific force of the parable exactly answering to the chronology which our Lord gives it. But in that specific application is involved one of the perpetually-renewing force for all ages of the Christian Church, specially for its last age. St. Matthew, as the Evangelist who sets forth the fulfilment of the Old Dispensation in the revelation of man's filial relation to God, and conjugal relation to the divine King, was particularly likely to record this parable.

A question was likely to arise in the minds of the disciples who heard it, Had all these virgins equal advantages? Could the foolish be equally prepared with the wise? If it was spiritual treasures in which the former were deficient, are not these emphatically divine gifts? Were not they withheld from those who were without oil, and who went to borrow it? The answer lies in the parable of the Talents. It is not separated from that of the virgins, as our translators have separated it by the formal words, " For the kingdom of heaven is like unto ;" words which though they are the proper and ordinary introduction to the parable generally, appear to be awkward and out of place in this instance. The bridegroom in his absence did not leave any of those whom he was afterwards to claim, without those inner gifts and endowments which were necessary that they might receive him on his return. The treasures might be apparently unequal because the tasks and temptations of those to whom they were committed were unequal. But all were adequate, all might be improved. They were precisely of that nature and quality that they could be improved. They were not absolute gifts, but gifts to be traded with. And the difference between one and another arises primarily from the neglect of this trading, ultimately from distrust in the owner, from believing him to be a hard master, " reaping where he had not sown, and gathering where he had not strewed ;" instead of a gracious master, who desires that his servants should share his work and enter into his joy. The principle of this parable then, as of the last, is deep and universal.

But if the Apostles needed the former for their own time, to explain what was coming upon them, and how they were to act, they needed also this for the same reason. It was a lesson for the world because it was first a lesson for them. There were two aspects of the lesson, one we shall find is brought out by St. Luke, one by St. Matthew. That with which we are especially concerned here, is the lesson concerning the evenness and righteousness of God's dealings, the assertion that the same joy is intended for all who do not distrust their divine employer, but are ready to work for Him and with Him in his spirit.

Then follows the memorable passage, beginning, "When the Son of man shall come in His glory." I have very few remarks to make upon it; for I do not in this or in any case desire to propose new interpretations. I only desire that we may consider more earnestly what we mean by our ordinary interpretations, that they may become less shadowy and more real, that they may bear upon our lives, and may not be merely a collection of loose fragmentary notions inconsistent with the letter and tenor of Scripture, inconsistent with themselves. Every one has a kind of dream respecting a great judgment in which the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory. Let him cherish that dream, let him suffer no thoughts or speculations of any one to disturb it, no not even the words of Scripture itself. But let him labor hard that it may be more than a dream. Let him not suffer so awful a truth as it must involve to be lost in phrases about "a great assize," in very vulgar and yet very vague impressions borrowed from the scenery of English courts of justice, or even from the pictures of great artists. If any of these associations are helpful in bringing to our minds an actual Judge of quick and dead, One to whom the secrets of hearts are open, we ought not to discard them. They must have *a* relation to these realities; there is something in them which is symbolical of them. But it is a matter of life and death, a matter infinitely concerning the sincerity of our minds, that we should take all possible pains to find out what the relation is, how the thing symbolized is connected with the symbol. Let us confess to ourselves plainly and

honestly that we have let the one stand for the other; that we have talked of a judgment and tried to frighten ourselves and others with it, but have not believed in it; that it hangs about us as a terrible phantom which we generally wish to get rid of; that the thought of it inspires us with any thing but the substantial abiding comfort and joy which it caused to psalmists, and prophets, and apostles. And when we have come to that humiliating confession, let us turn to this passage which must be the greatest guide of all to a right and practical understanding of the subject. And if we do believe that the Son of man is Himself best able to tell us what the sitting on the throne of his glory and the gathering before Him of all nations are, let us listen to his own teaching; let us think that when He utters the words, "Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these, ye did it to me," He proclaimed that which is the very truth of human existence, that with which it must be eternal life to be in conformity, and eternal death to be at variance. He actually is one with every man. He has come to proclaim that He is by His incarnation and His death. He did judge the old world according to that law. However little we may understand at present the course and method of His judgment, we must, if we accept Scripture as the interpreter of history, think that it was this law and no other which decided the condition of every nation and race. And in proportion as we feel assured that this was the case in every preparatory judgment and in the final judgment of the old world, we shall feel that it is the law, which having been affirmed in the great visitation upon Jerusalem, has guided the treatment of every nation and of every man since; the law which is judging us now; the law which will judge us in the last day. To us if we hold fast this truth and try to live by it, that judgment at the last day will be no idle fiction; not a pageant with which we shall dare to trifle, but a living eternal verity, which it would be the loss of all our hopes for ourselves or for our race, of all our faith in God, to part with.

CHAPTERS XXVI. XXVII. XXVIII.

On the first two of these chapters I have dwelt at great length. In the last it is an important characteristic of St. Matthew, that he speaks only of the Resurrection, not of the Ascension. The one is the fulfilment of all the meaning of the Old Dispensation; the other is the ground and commencement of the New. But it would not be the fulfilment of the past if it did not bring forth the Son of David and the Son of Abraham, saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth;" if the promise, "in thee and in thy seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed," had not been translated into the words "teach all the nations;" if the name of the I AM, which was the ground of the National polity, had not been expanded into the Name of "the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," the foundation of the universal Family.

ST. MARK.

It is a common notion that the writer of the second Gospel deliberately undertook to make an abridgement of the first. The reader observes that the same events are recorded in both, apparently in the same way, that one is shorter than the other, that various parables and discourses which add considerably to the beauty and fulness of St. Matthew are passed over by St. Mark, that his story is rapid, that he dwells on incidents more than words. What more natural than the supposition that he was selecting what seemed to him the capital points in the life of Jesus, discarding accessories?

The difficulties in this supposition increase at every step for a reader who bestows upon the Gospel the same kind of attention that he would think necessary in studying any ordinary document. All careful observers are struck with the vividness of St. Mark's style; the incidents which he relates are never merely chronicled; they are surrounded with all the circumstances which rendered them impressive to bystanders. His desire of brevity does not prevent him from giving stories of the same kind, as in the case of the two miracles of the loaves. He often introduces into his narratives particulars which an abridger, aiming merely at condensation, would have been certain to reject, if he had found them in his original. These remarks are so obvious that I cannot wonder that some of those who in former days were busy in the search for a Gospel out of which the rest might have been composed, should often have felt inclined to adopt the opposite notion to that which I am considering, and to fix upon St. Mark's history as answering nearly, though not exactly, to their conception of the primitive one.

The modern school very properly withdraws our thoughts from all speculations of this kind, and directs us to the actual books which we possess, urging us to look manfully at the contents of them, and observe their great and startling differences.

Attention to that precept compels me to notice, not merely an accidental departure here and there, in St. Mark from St. Matthew's Gospel, but an omission of that which we have found to be most characteristic of him. It is not that he omits a parable, or passes over a memorable discourse; it is that the feeling which possessed the mind of St. Matthew and colored all his language, is not apparently present at all in the same manner to St. Mark. If phrases, allusions, quotations, repeated, and as it were unintentional, indicate any thing, it must have been a predominant purpose in St. Matthew to speak of the Gospel as the fulfilment of that which had preceded it; if an absence of such phrases, allusions, and quotations, in the very places where the other had introduced them, is indicative of any thing, this was not the predominant purpose of St. Mark. If we suppose he had St. Matthew's narrative before him, the fact is all the more remarkable; no dream of shortening the previous history can have suggested *such* omissions.

Let it not be forgotten that the whole Sermon on the Mount is wanting in St. Mark. What a monstrous omission for an epitomizer who was choosing out the important parts of the divine history! What a natural and necessary omission for one who did not design to bring out the Fatherly kingdom as that which Christ had come to reveal; who had another object which his readers could not have perceived, if he had dwelt upon that topic which St. Matthew had so fully illustrated. I have already said what I believe his object was. I took the first verse of his Gospel as the text of this whole lecture, because I felt that it announced more distinctly than any one I could find in St. Matthew or St. Luke, that which was common to all the Evangelists. But it may be common and special both. It may be absolutely necessary that there should be an Evangelist who sets forth Christ Himself distinctly, simply in His own personality, as the

King of the nation, as the Lord of man; and who, that he may do that work properly, does not set forth that mystery of his relation to the Father which was implied in these acts, with the same prominence and distinctness. We may find, when we come to consider the history of the Apostolical Church, that there was a class of persons occupying a middle position between the Jewish and Gentile world, a set of persons with whom St. Mark is connected by a respectable tradition, for whom such a treatment of the subject was peculiarly necessary, whose most earnest wants would not have been satisfied, who would not have felt that the meaning of Judaism was fulfilled or that its connection with the outward world could be established, who would not have been delivered from some of their most dangerous tendencies, unless the Gospel of the Son of God had been presented to them in this simple and direct shape. We may find, as we go on to later Church-history, that as a matter of fact this view of the Gospel has, to the exclusion of almost any other, affected the condition of a whole age, has been the cause of all its strength; its exclusiveness and corruption, the source of all its weakness. This is not the time to enter upon either of these subjects; I merely allude to them in order to get a hearing for what I say, and to induce you to study the Gospel of St. Mark with this thought upon your mind. You will not expect me to go minutely over ground which I have previously travelled. I shall only add a few more hints to those I have given you already, which may enable you to feel that St. Mark carries out as much by his omissions as his statements, by his differences from St. Matthew as by his resemblances to him, the intention which he announces so simply and distinctly in the opening of his Gospel.

In the first chapter we are told nothing of a son of David or a son of Abraham. There is no genealogy, no account of a divine conception. We hear nothing of a journey into Egypt, nothing of kings coming from the East to worship Christ, or of children murdered for His sake. The beginning of the Gospel is John preaching in the wilderness; announcing that one is coming after him who is mightier than himself, because He will

baptize with the Holy Ghost; baptizing that mightier one, who, as he ascends out of the water, is declared to be the beloved Son. The Temptation is very shortly treated. It could not be passed over; but since the details of it given by St. Matthew illustrate principally the relation of the Son to the Father, His trust and dependance, they were wonderfully adapted to the object of that Evangelist; they would have disturbed the coherency of St. Mark's, and made his aim less intelligible. I desire to avoid refinements, but I cannot think the introduction of the words, "and He was with the wild beasts," by St. Mark, is insignificant. I believe that he wishes especially to exhibit the Son of God as the ruler of nature, as the Person in whom the original grant of dominion to man was fulfilled. And since the Temptation is the introduction to the ministry, it was fitting that this view of His character and office, as well as that of His perfect obedience, should be fully set forth.

This hint once given, will enable you I think, not indeed to discover in St. Mark what you had not seen in him before, but to account for your own impressions respecting him. You will find him recording every exercise of our Lord's power distinctly and minutely; making us more conscious than the other evangelists of the wonder which the on-lookers felt at a doctrine which was connected with dominion over unclean spirits; insisting upon the Son of Man's lordship over the sabbath-day; touching upon the call of the disciples and the ordaining of the Apostles as instances of His authority; recording parables, such as "the sower," "the man casting seed into the ground," "the mustard-seed," "the vine-dressers," which describe His personal influence and mysterious government; omitting nothing which can illustrate the nature of His kingdom and His relation to human beings, the doubts which were felt respecting the possibility that such power should belong to Him who was called the carpenter's son, the demonstration that it did belong to Him, and that He could confer it upon men, and that they would be able hereafter

to exercise dominion in His name under Him ; passing by every thing which does not serve to bring this truth into light, or to make his readers more sensible of it. While therefore there is the most strong external resemblance between him and St. Matthew, there is, I conceive, a lively and continual contrast in the design and in the effect of their narratives. The chapters which respectively conclude the two Gospels, display the difference perhaps more completely than any others. "All power is given to Christ in heaven and earth," the disciples are to go and baptize the nations ; Thus St. Matthew winds up his narrative. St. Mark adds, "And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name they shall cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents ; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them. They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." The first words speak of the reconstitution of humanity, of man brought back into submission and communion with God. The second speak of new powers, endowments, energies, with which the witnesses for this redeemed constitution should be invested, that they testify of Christ, the healer of the sick, the caster out of devils, as the real Lord of the race. St. Mark therefore cannot stop where St. Matthew stops, at the fact of a Resurrection, the fulfilment of all past hopes and aspirations : he alludes to the Ascension—though he but alludes to it. Another evangelist was needed to set forth the mystery of that fact and its relation to the after condition of the universe.

ST. LUKE.

CHAPTER I.

This Evangelist is St. Luke. No one has ever doubted that the two books in the New Testament which are attributed to him, stand in the closest connexion with each other. He addresses them to the same person, whoever that person may have been; he speaks of the first as "the treatise of that which Jesus *began* to do and to teach until the day that he was taken up."

The introduction to his Gospel has given rise to many disquisitions; I question whether we are yet alive to its full importance. "The things in which Theophilus had been catechised," "the things which are most surely believed among us," must all have had relation to the person of Christ. The theology of the Apostolic Church must have had a living centre. It was *in* Christ. Only through the knowledge of what He did and what He was, could its meaning be drawn out. Hence an Evangelist in every application of the word must be one who sets forth the life of Christ. Next it is clearly assumed in this introduction, that one who had not been an eye-witness himself of our Lord's doings upon earth, might be just as competent to be an Evangelist as one who had seen Him and talked with Him. There might be a number of facts still unrecorded concerning Him. But it was not the function of the Evangelist chiefly to look for these, but to follow up those which were admitted, which had become the common-places of the Church's faith, in order that their full purpose might be brought to light, that they might be known in the length and breadth of their human and divine sig-

nificance. What St. Luke promises, is not something new, but an *orderly* narrative, one that should exhibit the facts so coherently and harmoniously that the character which was disclosed by them, their relation to the past and present and future, might be more clearly and livelily apprehended. He speaks of many having undertaken the same task; he does not disparage their works or their qualifications; he merely asserts his own. All would be tried in the fire. That which was intended to the exposition of the Divine Mind, that which it concerned men to possess, would come through it and would remain a possession for ever.

If you have followed what has been said of St. Matthew, the nature of the contrast between his gospel and St. Luke's will at once be discovered by their accounts of our Lord's conception and birth. In St. Matthew, the birth of a Son of God by a woman, married to an actual heir of the house of David, but without his intervention, was the *fulfilment* of that line of births from Isaac downwards, each of which had attested God to be the author and preserver of the race. In St. Luke, the *difference* between the Old Dispensation and that which is to come out of it is illustrated by the parallel stories of Zachariah and of Mary. John is born of a father well stricken in age and a barren mother, as Isaac had been. It is attested in the case of the last and greatest of the forerunners of the Prophet and King, as it was in the case of Samuel the first of them, that birth is of divine power, not of human will. But still John is the child of a man; whereas that holy thing which is born of Mary is to be called the Son of God.

Whether these chapters are received as genuine or rejected as spurious, there can be no question that this contrast was present to the mind of the writer. It is one cause of the suspicion which attaches to them, in the judgment of modern critics, that the intention is so obvious. "How clearly," they exclaim, "we see, not the purpose of an historian to tell facts, but of a theologian to bring out a certain artificial theory." Whether it is an artificial theory, or the revelation of a Divine principle apart from which

the facts in the life of Jesus of Nazareth would not mean any thing or account for any thing, is precisely the question at issue —one which I cannot stop to discuss at each particular point of the narrative, without repeating myself most unwarrantably or anticipating the result of the whole investigation. What I am concerned with now is the connexion of these chapters with the rest of St. Luke's Gospel, and the evidence which they furnish as to the intent of it.

The adjuncts of the two stories must not be overlooked. There is in both Gospels an allusion to Angels. We might have supposed that it would be most definite in that which is essentially and characteristically Hebrew. On the contrary, we are merely told in St. Matthew that "the Angel" of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. In St. Luke we have the name of an angel, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God." All the Scriptures of the Old Testament speak of Angels, and assume the fact of communications between the visible and the invisible world. But not till the prophet Daniel are the visitants described by names, or any specific office assigned to them. The change in Jewish feeling on this subject after the captivity is often noticed, and is of course assigned to Chaldæan influences. That mode of accounting for it seems to me vague and unsatisfactory ; but I have no wish to throw it aside as if it were worth nothing, far less to overlook the fact which it seeks to interpret.

Supposing the Captivity to be, as the Jewish Scriptures throughout assume it to be, a most striking epoch in the history, (no less important, St. Matthew would teach us, than that of Abraham or of David,) one must believe it to be a step in the Divine revelation, as each of these was. The book of Daniel would seem to show us, the after history confirms the announcement, that it was a time when prophecy would be sealed up, when the records of the old world would be gathered together and would become a complete volume. This book would teach us also that the time of Nebuchadnezzar or of Cyrus was the commencement of a great period for all the nations, each of

which had its own appointed place in the Divine order or government. It is in connexion with these nations that he introduces Angels; each country is said to be under the government of some one. That there is a very close relation between this belief and the belief of tutelary divinities which prevailed throughout the heathen world, there can be no question. At the same time, one can hardly understand how a Jew could acknowledge the absolute government of the Lord of all over every nation, together with the specific government over his own, unless he had some such faith. "We are under the everlasting I AM: other nations He has committed to mediate rulers,—to Angels"—this was the opinion which a Jew would most naturally entertain. Yet it may have been developed in a period in which the streams of Jewish and Gentile history were tending to become confluent. It was in no sense a graft of Gentile notions upon a Jewish stem; it may have been a most important exposition of new facts by the application of an old principle; an interpretation of Gentile history and mythology by the old Jewish truth.

That the coming of Jesus Christ should be announced by some messenger from the invisible world, is a reasonable or an incredible fact, precisely according to the belief which we have respecting His office and character. If he were the King of Men, the Lord of the visible and invisible world, the bond between them, the absence of such an announcement would be a more perplexing fact than its occurrence. If He were not this, I confess that the story, however simply told, however unlike ordinary legends in its freedom from parade, must be given up. But admitting an annunciation at all, that it should take the form which St. Luke reports, and that he should be the reporter, seems to me altogether natural. For he is, according to the common hypothesis, which is the one I am adopting, *the* Gentile Evangelist, intended to prepare us for acknowledging Christ as the Desire of Nations, intended to tell us what the meaning was of that seemingly unintelligible incorporation of Jewish with Gentile history and feeling, which had been going forward ever since the Captivity.

But the angelical visitations are secondary and accessory in the case both of Zachariah and Mary to the message which they bring. "Thy wife Elizabeth shall conceive and bear a son," "The Holy Ghost shall come on thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." Here St. Luke shows us the central opposition between the new and the old age. The manifestation of the Holy Ghost distinctly, personally, as the Life-giver, Life-producer, as working upon and in the spirits and the bodies of human beings—most of us hold this to be the diagnosis of the Gospel kingdom. We often lose ourselves in vague expressions or metaphors respecting it; yet we should shrink from the thought that we are using metaphors, that we are not speaking of that which is most actual and efficient, when we are discoursing of the Holy Ghost and of his operations. And orthodox men would, I suppose, be equally shocked at the notion that that could be true of the members which was not in some transcendant sense true of the Head; that there could be a power communicated to them, or effective for them, of which He had not been the first receiver. Of them I only ask that they will follow the course of thought, carefully and literally, which the Evangelist brings before them, and that however reasonably they may cling to any habitual notions, rather than abandon them at the bidding of an ordinary teacher, they will be ready to cast them aside if the book which they confess to be divine should require the sacrifice. Of those who do not accept the document, I can only ask, that they will at least take pains to ascertain what it says, that they may not hastily impeach it of inconsistencies they or we have put into it.

One opposition more must be dwelt upon; its importance cannot be overrated. Zacharias is a priest, performing an office in the Jewish commonwealth; the communication which is made to him is connected with that office; he represents the commonwealth of Israel. Mary is simply a woman; a maiden of Galilee; her relationship to the house of David is only alluded to in so far as she was the wife of Joseph. She represents humanity; humanity in its lowliest, simplest form. And she shows what the ex-

cellence and purity of humanity consists in; "Behold the handmaid of the Lord." Here is the *sancta sanctissima*, the only sanctity which she claimed, or which it would not have been atheism for her to claim. That all goodness is in trust and obedience, that all evil is in distrust and disobedience, this is the lesson which St. Luke begins his Gospel by inculcating, and which we shall find penetrating his mind through and through, as it did that of his great Master and Friend.

St. Luke, it has often been remarked, is the Hymn-writer of the New Testament. The two Songs of Mary and Zacharias set forth, as all have perceived, the character of the New Dispensation; of the old as the witness and herald of the new. They both celebrate and express the fact that a spring of life and joy has been opened for human beings; that a kingdom of the Spirit is beginning among them; a kingdom now revealed but always existing; the subject of prophecy, because prophecy speaks of the *eternal* mystery, which at the appointed *time* is to be made known to men.

CHAPTER II.

The second chapter of St. Luke contains no allusion to the wise men coming from the East to seek a King of the Jews, nor to the flight into Egypt, nor to the murder in Bethlehem. But it speaks of the decree which went out from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed, of the message to the shepherds, that "to them was born in the city of David a Saviour, who was Christ the Lord," of the song, "Glory be to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill toward men;" of Simeon's blessing on Him, who was to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people Israel; of the widow who spake of the child to all them that looked for redemption at Jerusalem. All the scenery here is Jewish; the royal city, the offerings of purification, the holy doctor, the woman who was continually in the Temple serving God with fastings and prayers. But this only makes the

essentially human character of their rejoicings and prophecies the more remarkable. We do not hear of kings or priests, but of shepherds, of devout men and women, waiting for consolation and finding it, in the belief of a blessing to the Gentiles, of a redemption for mankind.

The other fact in this chapter, is that of the Child tarrying behind His parents at the feast, and going into the Temple among the doctors, to hear them and to ask them questions. Here there is no anticipation of the subsequent ministry. The Boy does not become a teacher; He is only a questioner. He preserves and fulfils perfectly the obedience and docility of the child, while he is about His Father's business. But there is a clear intimation of a spiritual power, which could bring the thoughts of men's hearts to light, and could make the learned scribe know himself and know God, as he had never done before. A kingship over nature, and over the minds and bodies of men, was brought out before us by St. Matthew; a life-giving sympathy, an intercourse with the inner man, a human fellowship grounded upon, not contradicting the divine condescension and compassion, is what St. Luke, more than either of the other Evangelists, compels us to recognize.

CHAPTER III.

The preaching of John the Baptist in the third chapter differs from the accounts we have had of it previously, in the answers which John makes to the different classes who ask him, "What shall we do then?" Perhaps the exceedingly simple character of the answers, enjoining merely common duties which belonged to the stations of the enquirers and carefulness in eschewing the temptations peculiarly incident to them, may strike some as at variance with the spiritual character which has been claimed for St. Luke. Would such directions about good works as a preparation for faith in the Deliverer, have been expected from a disciple of St. Paul? Or, if they belong naturally to the lower

dispensation of John the Baptist, would he have been the person to recollect and preserve them? I apprehend the very one. Men of all kinds and classes had come to John to be baptized. If they meant what they did, if they had actually sins to confess and had confessed them, they had received power from above to do right acts. They were to prove their faith in that power by doing them. Higher blessings would then be given them. They would know Him who had come to bind together in one, publicans, soldiers, all. They would receive His baptism of the Spirit and of fire, to fit them for higher ministries, to preserve them from the trial-day which was at hand.

CHAPTER IV.

I have nothing to say upon the question of the genealogy beyond what has been said a thousand times. That it is carried back to Adam has been evidence to all, that St. Luke is not purposing chiefly to speak of a Son of David and a Son of Abraham, even though none could completely fulfil those characters who was not the Son of Man and the Son of God. St. Luke must bring that fact out directly, not subordinately. The second Adam must clearly be seen to be in a far more complete sense than the first, yet in as actual and formal a sense, the representative of the race.

All the Evangelists declare that Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. St. Luke says that Jesus, "*being full of the Holy Ghost*, returned from Jordan, and was led into the wilderness;" he says that "*He returned in the power of the Spirit* into Galilee;" he speaks of His going into the synagogue at Nazareth, and opening the book where it was written, "*The Spirit of the Lord* is upon me." These are not trivial observations; they would be recognized in any book as indicating the habit and tendency of the writer's mind. The more they are considered in reference to the history which they introduce, and in the midst of which they occur, the more force will be perceived in them.

The Temptation, in all the Gospels, is the cardinal event upon which the subsequent ministry depends. I have alluded already to a difference in the order of the temptations as they occur in St. Luke, and have assented to the common opinion, that it is characteristic of the Gentile or human character of the third Gospel as distinguished from the first. I did not insist strongly upon the point, because I feel that the Temptation is so much a meeting-point between the two,—the obedience of the Son to the Father being the ground of that ultimate dominion over the kingdoms of the world which the devil does not, and cannot give,—that I have been both loth to press even distinctions which I feel to exist, lest they should interfere with our perception of that common truth which is at the root of them. There are many minute contrasts,—such as that between the statement that He fasted forty days, and that then the Tempter came to Him, and the words, "being forty days tempted of the devil,"—which I believe are very intelligible, and also very instructive, when we have apprehended the ground of the differences and resemblances in the Evangelists. But they are of more value when we trace them out for ourselves than when we receive them at second-hand. I merely wish to give hints which may assist the student of Scripture, not to overwhelm him with interpretations of my own.

CHAPTER V.

Every one perceives that there is a difference in the order of events in St. Luke and St. Matthew; every divine has, perhaps, tried, at some time or other, to trace the course of the respective narratives. I believe such experiments will lead to a great many disappointments; that the theories upon which we have thought we could venture most safely are found to leak unexpectedly when we are at sea in them. Yet I am far from thinking that the effort is without its reward, even if we come to no formal and positive decision upon the subject. I do not

profess to have any new light upon it; but when I have read St. Luke's story in reference to what I believe to be the leading thought of the writer, I think I have discovered an inward coherency in his record. It has justified itself to me, though I might blunder very much if I tried to explain why particular narratives might not have been transposed, why they occupy the places in which we find them. Supposing these Gospels to be works of divine art, they should have characteristics answering to those which we recognize in works of human art, still more in nature itself. There is an arrangement of parts which we could not lose without losing the sense and meaning of the picture, or poem, or landscape that is presented to us, which it is worth while to meditate upon, which critics may often assist us in considering, but which, after all, comes out to us by very slow degrees, which we shall probably never be able to interpret rightly to others or to ourselves, though it may impart a method to our own minds and may make all we do and speak more clear and intelligible. With these remarks I will dismiss this chapter, in which there is nothing, strictly speaking, new, though I am satisfied that the connexion in which it stands may give every passage in it a force different from that which it possessed when it was found with different antecedents and concomitants.

CHAPTER VI.

This observation is still more applicable to the sixth chapter. There have been endless discussions on the question whether the discourse contained in it is, or is not, an abridgement of the Sermon on the Mount. The facts of the case are these. We have in this chapter a very great number of the sentiments contained in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of St. Matthew, delivered nearly, though not exactly, in the same words. We have a number wholly omitted, though some of them appear with different modifications elsewhere. In the opening of the fifth of St. Matthew, it is said, "And seeing the multitudes, He

went up into a *mountain:* and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him;" in the seventeenth verse of our chapter it is said, "And He came down with them, and stood in the *plain.*" In St. Matthew the sermon follows His calling the two disciples James and John; in St. Luke it follows the naming the twelve apostles.

It has been a common theory, by which many thought that they explained these differences, that the Evangelists only culled from the discourses of Christ a number of sentences which they threw together into this general sermon. But all must, I think, perceive that the scenery of the discourse is part of its substance, that you can only abstract it from the circumstances in which it was said to have been delivered by making it not the utterance of a living being, but a set of school apophthegms; that is, by destroying its nature. That the same words should have been repeated in different places and circumstances, which would give them a new meaning and application, we should all expect. There is no true human teacher who does not repeat himself, or seem to repeat himself. He cares little for novelties, in the vulgar sense of the word novelty; he brings the same principles to bear on a multitude of cases, and so keeps them everlastingly fresh. But when you have a definite description of persons and places, you may be sure it is given because they have associated themselves, and were intended to associate themselves, with the words and thoughts spoken, which cannot be rudely torn from them without the dislocation and loss of their sense. Any one who compares the last three verses of the fourth chapter of St. Matthew with the 17th, 18th, and 19th of the sixth chapter of St. Luke, will find that they refer to the same kind of persons, the same places, the same scenery. The difference, that St. Matthew said, He went up into a mountain and opened His mouth, and that St. Luke says, He went up into a mountain to pray, and then came down into the plain or table-land to speak, is too trifling to be noticed. No one would suppose that He preached upon a high pinnacle or retired part of a mountain. St. Matthew's language is general, but accurate

enough for his purpose ; St. Luke's is more definite, because he had another fact to record, which made it important that he should mention his previous solicitude and the private selection of the Apostles. With respect to the times, it seems quite clear that each Evangelist is always ready to sacrifice mere chronology to that order or succession of events which most revealed his purpose. In the short period of our Lord's ministry there are certain great land-marks, such as the Temptation, the Transfiguration, the Entry into Jerusalem, which all observe. Within those landmarks they follow the bent and course of thought which the Spirit has given to each ; they group events according to another than a time order. So far as we can see, it is a very simple and natural order. St. Matthew, for instance, connects the calling and naming of the Apostles with the commission which was given them ; St. Luke connects the naming of them with a discourse which he intimates (and St. Matthew says nothing to the contrary) was delivered immediately after their appointment, and which sets forth the nature of the kingdom whereof they were to be the heralds.

It is therefore the nature and the intent of the discourse, as it is reported by the two Evangelists, which really concern us. Upon this subject I have made some remarks already. St. Luke has not omitted a few unimportant paragraphs of the sermon in St. Matthew ; he has omitted some of its most capital and characteristic passages, those which the reader of St. Matthew dwells upon, and which affect his view of every word in it. He cannot have done this undesignedly. He has no more abridged this discourse than St. Mark has abridged the whole Gospel of St. Matthew. He has omitted precisely that part which conveys to us the object and design of St. Matthew, which would have prevented us from perceiving his own. Thus the part of the discourse which he has preserved gains a force which otherwise would have been hidden ; it does not set forth the fulfilment of the old dispensation, but the special and distinct condition and office of the new. The important and precious Hebrew element was brought out in its fulness elsewhere ; St.

Luke's business was to sink that, that the pure human element of the teaching might be manifest to all.

CHAPTERS VII. VIII.

There are two narratives in the seventh chapter which belong exclusively to St. Luke. The first is the raising of the Widow of Nain's son, the second is the interview with the woman who was a sinner in the house of Simon the Pharisee. I suppose it must have struck most readers that in the first three Gospels there is less emphasis laid on the fact of the dead being raised to life than they would at all expect. The few acts of this kind which are mentioned are not alluded to as distinguished from the general course of our Lord's acts; even the impression which is said to have been made by them is not greatly dwelt upon. Such words as these, "There came a fear on all; and they glorified God, saying, That a great Prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited His people," contain all that they have to say upon this point. In these Evangelists you discover the conviction that the Christ was come to encounter death in all its forms, so deeply rooted, so governing their whole minds, that they do not stop to make distinctions, or feel one instance of the conflict as much more striking or memorable than another. I do not find any thing remarkable in St. Luke recording one more event of this kind than St Matthew or St. Mark.

But the sympathies of ordinary readers, which are greater helps in investigating the inner sense of these acts of power than the discourses of critics, have always pointed to the words, "son of a widow," as containing the most vital and essential part of this narrative. In them I believe we discern the mind of St. Luke. If it is one leading character of the New Dispensation as distinguished from the Old, that it puts a more direct honor upon the woman, or, more strictly speaking, brings out the honor which was there latent and implied, St. Luke should certainly, according to all the notions we have formed of him

hitherto, exhibit that sign of the later time in connexion with the life of the Son of God. We have seen how he exhibits it in the first and second chapters of his Gospel, not by any affected sentimentalism, not by losing sight of the manliness which belonged to the Jewish history and must belong to the history of every great and godly nation; but by connecting the glory of the woman with the glory of humanity, by exhibiting her passive and receptive faith as the agent through which a real Divine energy makes itself effectual. I should fear the charge of being fanciful in connecting this observation with the story of the miracle at Nain, if I had not the support of the most honest popular feeling, and if instances illustrative of the same tendency did not occur again and again in this Gospel.

One presents itself to us immediately. Our Lord is eating bread in the Pharisee's house; a woman that is a sinner comes in, brings an alabaster box of ointment, stands at His feet behind Him, weeping, begins to wash His feet with tears, wipes them with the hairs of her head, kisses His feet and anoints them with the ointment. It would be a great perversion of this story to think of it as referring to one sex merely. The common feeling that it represents Christ's treatment of the sinner as such, and the difference of one who is conscious of owing the five hundred pence, and of being forgiven that, from one who scarcely and with hesitation confesses to the fifty, must be the true feeling. God forbid that I should in any wise weaken it! If I did I should hide one of the greatest characteristics of this Gospel, the one which belongs to it as the Gentile Gospel—its eagerness, I mean, to bear testimony that the outcasts and the lost are continual objects of the divine care and search. But yet the person in whom this principle is set forth must not be forgotten. All her acts, every one has perceived it, are the acts of a woman. The whole female character comes out in them. It is indeed a side of humanity which must never be wanting in a man, or he will be congealed into a hard Pharisee or Sadducee. In one sense it is humanity itself, conscious of its shame, and yet dependent, trusting, hiding its evil in the love of One

above it, till it is buried and lost. But still it is the female side of humanity, not the commanding, kingly side, but the side on which lie submission, self-surrender, hope, the side which is prone to all weakness, error, ruin, and which can be raised out of the very depths of all, by the voice of love which it at the same time acknowledges as the voice of authority, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." The belief of a Magdalen has always gone along in the heart of Christendom with the belief in a Virgin. Both have been infinitely degraded, and with them the ideas of penitence and faith. In the degradation of them the female character has been degraded; for it has made a religion for itself, it has turned its fancies into idols, it has cut itself off from manly thoughts and feelings, and has caused *them* to take a defying atheistical shape. But both these ideas can be redeemed, and must be redeemed; no one would be so helpful in the work as that Evangelist who was appointed to bring them livingly before us.

The 8th chapter opens with another of the indications to which allusion has just been made. "And it came to pass afterward, that He went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with Him. And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magalene, out of whom went seven devils, and Joanna the wife of Chuza-Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto Him of their substance." This memorable and important passage is confined to St. Luke. On the strength of it, the Magdalen has been very reasonably identified with the woman who brought the alabaster box of ointment to the Pharisee's house. Whether she is also to be identified with the sister of Lazarus, is a more difficult question, upon which this passage certainly throws no light, and which, so far as I am aware, receives none from St. Luke's Gospel.

CHAPTER IX.

This chapter contains the story of the Transfiguration. It should therefore, according to a remark made a short time ago, be a critical one in the chronology of events. All commentators and harmonists have confessed that it is. The words in the 51st verse, "And it came to pass, when the time was come that He should be received up, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem," can have no other meaning than that He set out on that last journey which ended with His royal entry into Jerusalem and with His Crucifixion. All the passages in the Gospel between that and the 28th verse of the 19th chapter, have been considered, and must be considered, as connected with that journey; the period which they occupied may have been a very short one. They contain the most peculiar and remarkable part of St. Luke's gospel—a proof, if proof were wanting, how little the attempt to arrange the Gospels after the manner of the harmonists, can help us to understand their real import or appreciate the relation of different passages to each other.

This chapter contains between the 49th and 57th verses, two narratives which belong exclusively to St. Luke. The first turns upon the remark of St. John when Jesus took the child and set him by Him, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us;" a passage very interesting for the light it throws upon the way in which our Lord's words called forth an answer in the conscience, apparently not related to them; unspeakably valuable as pointing out the danger of our interference with God's own work of assigning offices to men. These words I apprehend connect themselves very closely with St. Luke's object. The disciple and friend of St. Paul would naturally be reminded of language which denoted that the calling of the twelve Apostles was not one which was meant to exclude another and more secret calling; that holy as their order was, its holiness proceeded entirely

from His vocation who might choose others in a different way to cast out devils in His name.

Still more characteristic is the other passage. Christ and His disciples on their journey to Jerusalem, enter into a village of the Samaritans; the inhabitants will not receive them; James and John ask, "Shall we call down fire upon them, as Elias did?" It must have been shortly after the confession of Peter, shortly after the Transfiguration. The Apostles therefore had a much stronger conviction than before, that their Master was the divine King, the Son of the living God. Could any thing be more natural than the vindication of His office and authority by the method which the Old Testament history had justified? It has been said, and I think most truly, that the answer, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of," was not a condemnation of Elias, but an assertion of the principle of the new economy. I cannot admit however that the words contained no censure upon the Apostles, or merely a censure for not understanding a difference which they were as yet not capable of understanding. The words are too strong for that. "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of," must signify, "Ye know not whether ye are under the dominion of a righteous Spirit or an unrighteous one." What Elias had done in a righteous spirit to assert the dominion of the righteous Ruler, the Lord God of Israel, they would have done to assert the authority of *their* Master, of the Person who had called *them* to be His ministers. The persecuting temper of the Apostles showed that they still did not understand that they were the disciples of a Son of Man, the head of a universal dispensation, who was to gather Samaritans and Jews into the same fold. For that reason St. Luke would be careful to report the story and its warning. But since this Son of Man was also the Son of God, since He came to fulfil that which had been spoken by Moses and Elijah, the words of James and John showed that they were only beginning to understand the acts of lawgivers and prophets, that they had not yet entered into *their* mind and spirit.

CHAPTER X.

The mission of the Seventy is recorded only by St. Luke. Old interpreters have conjectured that he was one of the number. There can be no need for a gratuitous assumption; we are told that he was an Evangelist; we have seen in the instance of the last chapter that he was careful to report words which checked the desire of an apostle to make his order a plea for exclusiveness. It was natural that he should dwell upon an incident which justified the existence of a distinct class of teachers; which showed that the New Dispensation, though derived from the Old and recognizing its principles in the number of the original Apostles, would require and possess an organization adapted to its work among the Gentiles. It will be remarked that neither here, nor in the commands to the twelve Apostles in the twelfth chapter, is there the limitation to the tribes of Israel which we find in Matthew; an indication that St. Luke contemplated the ultimate and universal meaning of both offices rather than their temporary restriction. In their strictness St. Matthew's directions belong to the immediate going forth of the Apostles to the towns whither Christ himself had gone or would go. But it is impossible not to see more in the words, "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Judah till the Son of Man come," than a mere reference to the time of their Master's continuance on earth. What force they did bear in the minds of those to whom they were addressed, and how they were obeyed, we may have to consider in my second lecture. I am only desirous here to point out the consistency of St. Luke in following out the idea whereby his Gospel is distinguished from the Hebrew one.

The exquisite passage, in which the joy of the Seventy because the devils are subject to them, is brought into comparison with the rejoicing of the spirit of Jesus, when He said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast

hid these things from the wise and prudent," is worthy of the deepest study for its own sake, and I think also for the light which it throws upon our immediate subject. Spiritual life and joy, in its pure form and in its temptations, must, if what has been said before is true, be a subject for the Evangelist of the coming age especially to dwell upon. Surely the loss would have been incalculable if we had not this indication of the fountain of gladness which there was in the innermost heart of the Man of Sorrows.

The words which were spoken privately to the disciples, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: for I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them," at once suggest that comparison between the time that had been, and that was to be, which this whole Gospel is bringing before us. They spring out of the previous words; they show how the oil of gladness in Christ could not be confined to himself, but flowed upon all about him; His blessedness was in the recollection of their blessedness, and theirs was to consist in knowing the Father and the Son.

I believe also that the Church (see Gospel for 13th Sunday after Trinity) teaches us much by connecting these words with the passage that follows them—with the question of the lawyer, and the parable of the good Samaritan. The representative of the old world—of the Law—comes forward with a question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The Pharisaical schools, which must have understood by *eternal* life (as so many of us do) merely *future* life, the rewards after death, will of course have been continually discussing this point; the teacher who could offer the best rules would be esteemed the wisest. The observation must be repeated which I made in reference to the young ruler who, with a different purpose, and in a different state of mind, proposed a similar question. The keeping of the commandments was not held to be a security for obtaining this future life by those who set most store by the commandments. Something more must be done. Each doctor could suggest

what were the most acceptable methods of pleasing God ; how a man might increase his chance of felicity. What scheme had the new prophet to propose? The reply is an *argumentum ad hominem :* the student of the Law is sent back to the Law. Our Lord does not sanction the doctrine that more is required than is written there. But what *is* written there? Then the lawyer recollects the words which some enlightened doctor of an olden time had probably set before his hearers as expressing the highest demands of God upon his creatures. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." Assuredly he could not have answered better ; whether another told him, or he found for himself that these words in Deuteronomy explained the nature and condition of human life, he was right ; the secret was there. But the lawyer had never felt before so keenly as then, when the eyes of Him who was Truth were upon him, and when he heard himself commended for his knowledge of the right way,—that these grand words did not meet his case. Of course it was possible to love God with all the heart and soul ; of course, also, it was possible to love one's neighbor as one's self. But who is he? The text does not tell that. What a discovery for a lawyer to make! The letter of the sublimest command was powerless to enforce obedience! It could not even with all its accuracy define its own objects! A whole world was left open to the subtlety of interpreters, practically to the fancy of the ordinary man, in fixing the limits of that one word "neighbor"! And where was the definition to be found? The parable answered the question. It reveals the existence of a Law of Love, acting directly upon the heart, determining that heart by its own power to recognize neighborhood where all outward geographical rules, old traditional feelings, the maxims of religion, denied its existence. It revealed at the same time the impotency of a mere rule to make a man practically confess neighborhood, where all geographical lines, traditions, religion, proclaimed its existence. The priest and the Levite saw the man who had gone down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and passed by on the other side.

There is, I am sure, a depth in this parable, taking it in its simplest sense, to which familiarity has made us blind. I do not doubt that the very incident had occurred, as it is described. The Samaritans are throughout represented as open to impressions of affection and gratitude which the Jew, cased in formalities, did not receive or entertain. Whence came these impressions? Did they come from the evil nature? Or had the Samaritan less of this evil nature because he rejected a portion of the Scripture, and did not worship in the Temple at Jerusalem? Or was there some secret spring of good from which all that was loving in Jew or Samaritan proceeded; some actual Person in whom the law of Love dwelt perfectly, and from whom men derived their impulse and power to fulfil it? Should not Jews, convinced of their inability to fulfil that law though they possessed written letters of stone, cry out that such an one should come forth out of the darkness and declare Himself to them as the Lord of their lives, the author of their obedience? If He did so declare Himself, might not Samaritans, might not Gentiles own, This is the common brother of us all; the One who owns all wounded and half-dead creatures as objects of His love and care; the One whose Spirit can help us all to go and do likewise. Blessed are your eyes, fishermen of Galilee, for you see that universal brother whom kings and prophets desired to see!

If I am not mistaken, we shall find that this parable is the type of those which are peculiar to St. Luke; that though each has a distinct purpose and brings out a different truth respecting the divine Kingdom, a feeling of the contrast between Law and Gospel, between the human and the merely national, between the mind of God as set forth in a Person, and that mind as it is exhibited in decrees, of the contrast, and yet of the essential oneness of the principles of the old world and the new, is latent in them all. It may be difficult at times to distinguish between this idea and the idea of fulfilment in St. Matthew, each so involves the other, each is so impossible without the other. Yet the more we think of it, the more we shall find that if either

had been presented alone, there would have been narrowness and imperfection in that which ought to be universal and perfect, and that when they were both presented, there was abundant room for partisans to take hold of each, and to represent it as the contradiction, not the completion, of the other. But I am anticipating a future part of this inquiry.

I have represented St. Luke's Gospel as in some sense an exhibition of *contrasts*. That characteristic has always been recognized in the story which concludes this chapter. The two forms of character which men have been accustomed to describe as the active and contemplative, are supposed to be brought together, and a very distinct preference to be expressed for that of which Mary was the type. No doubt there is this opposition; no doubt it belongs to all ages. But I question whether we arrive at the real force of our Lord's words by reducing two actual women into representatives of certain qualities which ought to be united in every character, if it is formed in the image of Him whose inward delight was to do the will of His Father in Heaven, and who went about doing good. Martha complains of her sister, and is rebuked for her complaining, not for her diligence. The deeper moral would seem to be, that restlessness and bustle are not activity, that a still current of inward life is essential to steady patient work. I am afraid that our eagerness to find a force and emphasis in the words, "one thing is needful," proceeds less from a reverence for Him who spoke them, than from the convenience of so short a sentence as a motto for sermons, and from an unhappy notion that religion is a thing to be separated from all other things—the pursuit of *one* selfish object rather than of a great many. If we once adopt that notion, we shall certainly not sit at Jesus' feet; we may not be as active as Martha was, but we shall be as much troubled by outward cares and inward restlessness as she can ever have been. These remarks may raise the suspicion that I am anxious to weaken the popular impression of the passage. My real desire is to strengthen it by disconnecting it with some accompaniments with which I think it has nothing to do. The genuine common feel-

ing respecting Mary and Martha is in accordance with the hints I have given respecting St. Luke's general object, and illustrates that special tendency which I have noticed in him to bring out the female character in its relation to Christ and His Gospel, thus seizing one of the points which has remarkably distinguished the history of the modern world from that of the old.

CHAPTER XI.

In the Sermon on the Mount, as reported by St. Matthew, our Lord bids His disciples not pray as the Pharisees did, standing in the corners of the streets, but to their Father who saw in secret, and Himself would reward them openly. Then He says, "After this manner therefore pray ye." Here the disciples say, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." He repeats with some variation the same form of words. This form, it has often been remarked, had long been known to the Jews; at all events they had each of its separate petitions. It is the LORD'S prayer, not because Jesus taught His disciples to cast away that which had been in use previously, but because He enabled them to enter into the sense of it, to understand that God was answering it and would answer it, to feel that their Father was Himself meaning to accomplish those wishes which He taught them to utter. The Pharisee might pray, saying, "Our Father," standing in the corner of the streets; but he did not believe in a Father, he acknowledged only a Being whose name he dreaded, whose kingdom he was afraid must come, whose will in heaven he wished to be like his on earth. St. Matthew might therefore most justly represent Christ as fulfilling the very letter and spirit of the Old Dispensation, by teaching that confession of a Father, that desire for the triumph of His Name, His kingdom, His will, which they by their self-righteousness were continually setting at naught. But the disciples would very naturally think that a prayer which Christ had spoken in the hearing of a great multitude, was not the one

which He intended for them, His chosen band. They saw Christ praying upon a mountain apart; they remembered that John had communicated what his disciples thought was a peculiar wisdom to them; would He not tell the secret of prayer, of influencing the divine Mind, could He not give them His esoteric lore? He taught them the same "Our Father." This was to be the prayer for the New Dispensation—this common prayer, this which belonged to the poorest beggar among the crowds around the Mount as much as to them, the ministers and judges of the new kingdom.

Then follows what we have not elsewhere, a parable recommending importunity—saying, that a friend may obtain that by continual entreaty which he does not obtain merely because he is a friend. Compare this with a passage in St. Matthew, in which it is said, "Do not think ye shall be heard for your much speaking; for your Father in heaven knows what things ye have need of before you ask him." The two lessons seem in direct opposition to each other. And, what is curious, the sentiment which liberal and enlightened men of this day approve, and are fond of quoting, is recorded by the narrow-minded Hebrew Matthew; the one which they denounce as fanatical and superstitious, we owe to the disciple of St. Paul. It may be well for them, it is certainly well for those who reverence these Gospels, to observe, that the importunity which St. Luke urges, both here and in a parable which will come before us hereafter, is importunity that God's will may be done, that God's kingdom may come. What that kingdom is, what that will is, how the one is to be accomplished, and the other established, He must know before we ask Him. But the eagerness of our entreaty that it should be done, will depend, first, upon our belief that His is a good will and a good kingdom; secondly, upon our experience that there is a very bad will and a very bad kingdom actually and perpetually resisting it; thirdly, upon our confidence that we are meant to be fellow-workers with our Father in heaven—meant, with the energy of our wills and the energies of our acts, to assist in the victory of the true over the false; in other words,

must depend upon the degree in which the Spirit of our Father in heaven works in us. Most rightly therefore the Gospel which directly treats of the communication of the Spirit to man as the source of his energies and acts, would dwell upon this side of the truth. And it illustrates this difference, and the object of our Evangelist, that in the parallel passages, Matthew vii. 11, and Luke xi. 13, St. Luke sacrifices the antithesis, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father which is in heaven give good gifts to them that ask Him?" that he may introduce the words, "Give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." No doubt our Lord at different times used both expressions; but what a light does the latter throw upon the former!

From these words St. Luke proceeds, by what seems to me a very natural process of thought, to the argument of our Lord with the Pharisees respecting the power by which He cast out devils. It *was* by a Spirit He cast out devils. If it was a bad spirit, then Satan was divided against himself; if it was by a good spirit, then the strong man who was keeping his goods in peace had been assaulted by One who was stronger than he.

Then by another transition still more characteristic, he sets forth the opposition between the spiritual kingdom and the seeking for signs; between the spiritual power which makes clean the inside of the man first, by that means purifying the outward, and the materialism of the Pharisees, who made clean the outside of the cup and the platter, while their inward part was full of ravening and wickedness. I have spoken of all these passages before, but I wish the reader to observe how they may obtain a new force from their connection.

CHAPTER XII.

In some English Bibles this chapter is headed, "Christ's charge to the Apostles." Now there is no allusion to the Apostles, as such, in the whole discourse which it contains till

St. Peter asks (ver. 41) our Lord, "Speakest thou this parable (concerning preparation for the Son of Man) to us, or even to all?" And he receives the answer, "*Who* then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household?" Undoubtedly, many of the sentences in this chapter form part of the charge to the Apostles in St. Matthew, as many of them belong to the first stage of His ministry. The new force which they receive in St. Luke seems to be this, that they are addressed to disciples, or to individuals of the multitude, not to the twelve; that they are connected with the last journey to Jerusalem, the post-transfiguration period; therefore with more strong denunciations of all the habits which were destroying the Jewish heart, and making it incapable of recognizing its King. There are a great many minor differences which will suggest themselves to the attentive reader, and which make this discourse as full of fresh teaching as if its words had occurred nowhere else.

CHAPTER XIII.

Every passage in this chapter is obviously bearing upon Jerusalem and the approach to it. Several incidents in it are found only in this Gospel. The force of the answer respecting the Galilæans, and those on whom the tower of Siloam fell, as correcting a tendency, strong then and strong always, to determine the condition of individuals from the events which befal them, has been always acknowledged; not enough stress perhaps has been laid upon the clause, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." He does not teach them to think lightly of such occurrences as those which were reported to him; they were what the Jews considered them, divine visitations; signs and tokens of the divine mind; but they were signs, not about those who perished, but to the nation and to each member of the nation who heard of them; warnings of a *like* punishment which Roman governors or the powers of nature might be appointed to bring upon covetous, self-righteous, hypocritical stewards of

God's mercies to mankind. When we draw any lesson from this part of the discourse, we turn it into a warning of punishment in a future world ; we do not see how directly our Lord denounced a judgment in this world upon a people which is proud of its privileges, and is only making them an excuse for judging and despising others.

In this sense the parable of the fig-tree follows most naturally upon the last words. Every preparatory warning of the coming judgment was a voice saying of the barren tree, "Cut it down ; why cumbereth it the ground?" and contained at the same time the petition, "Let it alone this year also."

I have observed already, that the habit of mind which produced the Pharisaical doctrine respecting the Sabbath is represented in the Gospels, not as an excess of good, but as essentially, radically evil ; hateful to God ; not to be tolerated through fear of weakening the authority of the commandment ; but to be regarded with "anger" as subversive of it. Nowhere should we more look for one of our Lord's solemn, practical protests against this detestable temper than here. For nothing more proved the fig-tree to be rotten at the core, incapable of bearing any wholesome fruits.

I have commented already on the two parables which follow.* The Mustard-seed, I have said, is common to the Evangelists, being equally important as explaining the expansion of the universal out of the national kingdom, as the process of development in the universal. If I have been right in following the judgment of many wise men respecting the use of the word "leaven," it was almost needful that the working of the true principle should not be exhibited without an allusion to the false, which in every age would work with it and beside it.

The terrible announcements in the previous discourse were likely enough to produce the kind of anxiety out of which the question would proceed, "Lord, are there few that be saved?"

* The leaven has been spoken of too much as if it occurred only in St. Matthew. I would beg the reader to correct that mistake.

This often-repeated question is generally censured as indicating a desire for definite information on a subject where God does not please that we should have it. But does not its error lay rather in its *indefiniteness;* in the willingness of those who utter it to be content without a clear feeling of what it is from which they, or any, need to be saved? Our Lord seems to treat the error in this way: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." The strait gate of sacrifice; of deliverance from self;—this surely was that which those who were self seeking, plotting for their own salvation, would not find. And since the self-seeking tendency of the Jew was that which on this occasion and all others he had been denouncing, how awfully did the personal warning chime in with all that he had been saying of the excision of the nation! How needful that each of his disciples should then and always be seeking to know Him; since a time was at hand when the Master of the House would reveal the secrets of every heart, and when it would be nothing to have eaten and drunk in his presence, or taught in his streets. Surely we do not in the least weaken the admonition for every time and every land, by supposing that it had a direct and remarkable application to that age; that the Son of Man was then about to try every man of what sort he was. The following words, already introduced in St. Matthew in connection with the healing of the centurion's servant, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, &c., and they shall come from the east and from the west," would have been quite inappropriate here if the disciples had not intended to connect the thoughts which concerned their own personal life with the history and destiny of their country.

It was the same day, when the same thoughts were filling our Lord's heart, that the messengers came to say, "Get thee out; for Herod will kill thee." The answer is "Go and tell that fox, I *must* walk to-day and to-morrow, and the day following." The men of Galilee cannot kill me. "A prophet cannot perish out of Jerusalem." The deep solemn music of the speech which

follows has entered into the hearts of hundreds of thousands. They have received it in the best and truest way, as a testimony of Christ's care and love for even the most worthless, as a declaration that those who are not gathered under his wings choose to be separate. But though this must be the force of the words, we do ourselves as well as the history, in its letter and spirit, an unspeakable wrong, if we forget that the words refer to an actual city ; and that *the* curse upon that city was that of being left to be the victim of its own self-will, party-spirit, hypocrisy.

CHAPTER XIV.

Another instance of healing on the Sabbath-day reminds us that we are still occupied with Pharisaical corruptions ; that Christ is laying his axe to the root of them. The discourse which follows is said to be a parable. Yet it would seem to be only a simple comment upon the desire of men at a feast to seize the chief places. I apprehend that use of the word is very instructive. The parable never excludes a plain direct meaning. It is not worthless for the particular case to which it refers. But it takes that case as the manifestation of a law applicable to a number of much higher cases, belonging to the inner as well as the outward world. That habit of self-seeking which discovered itself in the struggle for the uppermost places at the feast, was the one which was undermining the Jewish nation, because it is the canker at the root of humanity itself, the great anti-christian, ungodly principle. It was not therefore the mere accident of a feast going forward which led our Lord to pass from this parable to his admonition, "when thou makest a supper, call not thy friends nor thy brethren, etc." I do not undervalue the observation, that our Lord always used passing outward occurrences as texts of His discourse. It is a key to much that we read in these Gospels, and points out their infinite value as guides to the teacher. But the external occurrence is only an index to the more inward parts of His discourse. If He came

to destroy the self-seeking, competitive spirit, which makes each man crave to be above his neighbor, He came to destroy another result of that same spirit, which makes men's acts of kindness towards each other the result of a calculating spirit, the desire to be recompensed. And let us not fancy that our Lord is merely giving that principle another direction, that he is raising selfishness to a higher power, when He says, "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." For in all his discourses He had been teaching that this recompense is the being like God, who sends His rain upon the just and upon the unjust, upon the good and the evil. He would not indeed get rid of the name or idea of a recompense. The one is worked into the very tissue of language, because the other belongs to the very constitution of man and of the universe. The notion of excluding rewards is fantastical and absurd. But they may rest upon a principle the very opposite to selfishness, upon the divine order of which selfishness is the subversion. And I am bold to say that there is no case in all our Lord's discourses, in which the recompense which he proposes to man, does not consist mainly in the deliverance from the selfishness which is his great torment and oppression, but upon which, alas, the followers and ministers of Christ have been content to build their notion of His kingdom in this world and in the world to come.

The topic of the feast is not exhausted. A man in the crowd felt instinctively that a society in which men should invite the poor and the blind and the halt, must be a kingdom of heaven: our Lord, he knew, had said that such a kingdom was at hand; "Blessed," he exclaimed, "are these that shall eat bread in it, who shall be permitted to come to its festival." Hence, the transition was natural to that spiritual feast which especially belongs to the kingdom of Heaven. According to the common notions which were current among the religious Jews, and are current among ourselves, this feast should be represented as far more select than the other. In proportion as its blessings are deeper, more removed from the sensual apprehensions of men, we should suppose that the invitations to it would be rarer.

Common food might be thrown away upon common people, celestial dainties would be reserved for a special band, utterly unlike the vulgar, and separated from them. Such notions are very natural. There must be a truth latent in them, and yet there is the most intense falsehood latent in them, the very falsehood which undermined the Jewish nation, and has been at all times undermining the Christian Church. The spiritual is not less universal than the outward feast. The inward principle of the kingdom of heaven is revealed in the summons of the poor and halt and blind to the material supper. This is surely the great doctrine of the parable, which comes out here in quite another aspect than that which it bears in St. Matthew, partly from the incidents and discourses which border upon it, partly from some differences in its structure which are obvious to every reader. The king making a marriage for his son, a cardinal point in St. Matthew's parable, is wanting here. It would evidently have been out of place, and drawn the mind away from the subject with which St. Luke desired to impress it. Again, the excuses in St. Matthew are merely general; here they are distinct and dramatical, exhibiting the different reasons which lead men to refuse the blessings, the universal blessings, which are lying most near to them, that they may grasp at distant accidental goods which they can call their own, and from which they can exclude their fellows. Thirdly, one very characteristic point in St. Matthew's parable, the insult and murder of the messengers and the destruction of the city, which we might have looked for from the general character of the discourses in this part of St. Luke, is passed over; for this too, I imagine, belongs to the idea of the marriage of the son, but would not have added any thing to our impression respecting the feast as such, and the comprehensiveness of the invitations to it. Lastly, the fact of the man not having the wedding-garment, which illustrates very strikingly the doctrine, "Many are called, but few are chosen," is not wanted to explain the great truth, that men lose this feast because they prefer their own selfish enjoyments to those which they must share with men who come from the streets and the

highways. I should recommend the comparison of the two forms of this parable as one of the best exercises for the purpose of arriving at a knowledge of the distinct objects and general design of the Evangelists, as well as for ascertaining the nature of the parables in themselves.

I have spoken already upon the passage which follows. Every one has noticed that it is more emphatic in St. Luke than elsewhere. It is not "Whoso loveth father or mother more than me," but, "Whosoever hateth not father and mother, and his own life also, cannot be my disciple." We owe much, I believe, to this variation. If we had only the milder expression, there might be a justification for much of the language and conduct of those in the Romish communion and other communions, who have maintained that what they call religious duties are continually at variance with human duties, and that the one must give place to the other. Therefore it is always a question to be decided by a morbid conscience, or by a priest, when this struggle between the greater and the lesser love arises, and how the sacrifice is to be made. But no confessor or priest has courage to say, meaning what he says, "You must *hate* father and mother in order to save your soul;" only, "You must avoid the excess of love which would betray you." But Christ says this. You contend that His words must not be explained away. Then do not explain them away. Find a meaning for these along with those other words, "Yea, and his own soul also," and you will be worth listening to. I conceive that we are commanded to hate ourselves, our souls and bodies, and every thing that we prize merely as our own, in order that we may have that love which is in Christ, and which embraces father, mother, wife, children, our own souls, as all connected with Him, and based upon His relation to them and to us. In this way the passage would be in exact harmony with all that has preceded it. The Jew was resting his religion, his politics, his morality, his domestic affections, upon a ground of self. They would therefore all go to ruin, as we know they did. Christ came as the true root of humanity, the real foundation of all religion, politics, moral-

ity, domestic affections, the only reconciler of them with each other, the only security for their permanence. If any one would be His disciple, he must throw aside the other principle altogether, he must seek to banish it from his life. If he did not, he would find that he was engaging in a war with an enemy who would be far too mighty for him; he would be sitting down to build a tower which he could not finish. He would certainly send an embassy and desire conditions of peace with the great spiritual enemy of Christ and of men, if he was not ready to strip himself of all which he had, to give up his own self, his own righteousness, every thing which exalted him above another. Men are the salt of the earth, they keep it from putrefying while they have the divine, life-giving principle in them. All the selfishness of the world has not been suffered to destroy it; for there has been a seed proclaiming God, and not self, to be the ground of its institutions, the end of which they exist. But if that divine seed becomes itself infected with the maxim and principle of the corrupt world, if the religion of the elect becomes another and the most concentrated form of selfishness, how are they the salt of the earth? how can they ever become so? "He that hath ears to hear," said our Lord, and His words do not pass away, "let him hear."

CHAPTER XV.

I might rest all that I have said respecting the peculiarities of St. Luke upon this chapter, the one in his Gospel which has probably exercised most influence upon the mind of Christendom in all periods. But I should be sorry, for the sake of using this advantage, to separate this passage from those which precede it, or to suggest the notion that there is any break in the line of the writer's thoughts. The exclusiveness of the Pharisee, and of the Jewish nation as embodied in him, has been brought out before us in all that we have lately been reading. That exclusiveness has been exhibited as the anti-christian principle, the one which

must hinder the Jew from believing in Him who was come as the King and Shepherd of men. It is in this character, I conceive, that St. Luke presents that sin which St. Matthew makes us feel to be an outrage upon the law and the prophets, the fulfilment and completion of all the evils which they had denounced.

The parable of "The Prodigal Son" has seemed to most persons to contain a hint of the Gentile economy, as well as an implicit condemnation of the Jew, who would not have his brother received back with music and dancing. Yet this has been rather the feeling of commentators than of the people. They have protested against any view of the parable which shall rob them of its distinct personal application, which shall make it not a message to the individual prodigal, to all who will claim for themselves that character. They are right. The sure witness of the heart that this parable expresses the very inmost mind of God, cannot be set aside to make it square with any interpretations, however reasonable, however seemingly consonant with the circumstances and intention of the Evangelist. But if we really look to this discourse of our Lord's for a revelation of the divine purpose, we shall find that all the different views of it which become in themselves either dry and scholastic, or narrow and partial, are pervaded by a higher light which harmonizes them.

In the first place, we should take the incidents of the story simply as they stand. The parable is not a tale about some distant beings. Actual publicans and sinners were about our Lord, actual Pharisees were murmuring, "This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." Of these sinners our Lord surely speaks when He says, that the shepherd leaves the ninety and nine in the wilderness to seek the one sheep that was lost; of these, when He speaks of the woman sweeping the house diligently till she finds her piece of money. We shall misunderstand St. Luke greatly, and St. Paul more, if we suppose that they concern themselves chiefly about Gentiles as such. They are born Jews. All their heart and sympathies are essentially Jewish. But they have found out that to be Jews they must be men. It is a Gospel to men, a covenant with men they require, and therefore

with the Gentiles, or with all nations. The remark is surely obvious enough. My reader may almost smile that I state it with so much emphasis. But I do not think he knows how much the commentators, how much the Christian world, how much he and I have forgotten it, or what incalculable confusion and loss have ensued from this forgetfulness. If we can once fairly rid ourselves of it, I believe the Gospel of St. Luke, and the Epistles of St. Paul, will come out to us as quite new books, new, though they are essentially the old books, with the very words we have read from childhood, taken even more literally and simply than we took them then.

With this one thought on our mind, we shall come to the story of the younger and the elder son without the least fear that we shall be cheated of any of its individual significance, if it should comprehend the widest views of God's purposes in the history of the world. If the prodigal is spoken of from the very first as a son, if the hard-hearted elder brother in the field is told, "all that I have is thine," we must be prepared to ask ourselves manfully, whether these are not the primary facts and laws of the New Dispensation, whether the Gospel is not a claim for men as men to be sons of God; an assertion that they must be prodigals, joining themselves to citizens of the country and feeding swine, till they know that to be the case; and that if they do know it, the condition of their enjoying it and being the better for it, is that they should recognize the right of all, the most outcast, to the title, and should rejoice when they come back with a new and childlike delight to claim it. The view of God's purposes in all His dealings with mankind, which the parable thus considered sets forth, is indeed most comfortable to the reader of Gentile as well as Jewish history; but it interprets still more remarkably the modern world than the old, the right which Christendom has had to claim for all its sons and daughters sonship to God, the impossibility of attaching any thing but a narrow and formal meaning to the ordinance which stamps us Christians, if it does not proclaim that truth to each one of us. At the same time it contains the most earnest encouragement to

spread far and wide the Gospel (that is to say, the good news to men of their sonship), and a warning of the great guilt by turning Baptism into a plea for exclusiveness, into a denial of that human privilege which it asserts and upon which its glory rests. But along with this general force, the parable carries in it the history of each man who comes to himself; showing how that return to human sanity can be nothing else than the discovery of an actual Father, how this discovery implies the acknowledgment of an attraction and influence proceeding from Him, a confession that He has sought for the lost sheep, has swept diligently for the piece of money. And here we see how the lines of St. Matthew and St. Luke, starting from different points, meet and coincide. The one shows us Christ revealing a Father, the other Christ bestowing a Spirit; but the Spirit guides the lost child to the Father; the moment his heart is awakened by that touch, he knows from whence it must have proceeded.

CHAPTER XVI.

The covetousness of the Jew has been brought before us already under various aspects. We have seen that it is *the* sin which the New Testament generally—this Gospel particularly—imputes to him. We must not, under pretence of finding out a more spiritual signification, shrink from giving the word its most vulgar force as denoting the mere craving for money and grasping it when obtained. On the other hand, we must not limit the disease by this manifestation of it. The worst form of it, that which touched the vitals of the nation, was the religious form; but those who exhibited this would often exhibit the other; if they did not, they would communicate it to persons whose tastes and education were different from their own. These remarks are very necessary to the understanding of this chapter.

The two parables in it ought, I conceive, to be considered together. The Jew was a *steward* who, by his dispensation of God's bounties, whether material or spiritual, was to show what

He is and what He requires of those who possess advantages which their fellow-men have not. This steward is accused to his Lord that he has wasted his goods. They have been in the strictest sense wasted, because, according to the law under which they are held, they must decay and grow less if they are not scattered abroad. The steward is called to account; God makes him feel in himself that he has violated a trust. The hour is coming when he will be cast out of it. What shall he do? He cannot confess his fault: he cannot begin a new course of effort. But he can use his commission as a means of getting friends. He can make men, in whom there has been kindled an earnest sense of obligation to some divine teacher and friend, feel that these obligations are less than they had fancied. He can destroy in the peoples of the earth the religion which they have; he can rob them of that conscience and moral instinct with which God had endowed them. Who can doubt that this was the effect of the Jew's presence and false witness in a number of heathen lands? Who can doubt that his unbelief in these idols helped to deprive the heathens of the flickering, insecure faith which they had, while his own godlessness supplied nothing in the place of it? How strictly was this putting fifty measures of wheat or of oil where the conscience had written a hundred! And yet was the steward wrong in thinking that he was meant to win the love of these people about him? or that the treasures which God had given him were to be the means of winning it? No, surely, he was right; he made the discovery in a roundabout way, which, if he had made it before, would have changed him from an unfaithful into a faithful servant. If he had dispensed his master's wealth as he was meant to do, instead of fancying that it was given for his own use and behoof—instead of thinking that to possess it was the great blessing of all—he would have found the mammon of unrighteousness, which proved a millstone about his neck, a mighty blessing. And I say unto you, my disciples, Use the money which God gives you for Him, not for yourselves, and it will bring in friends who will not merely give you the temporary refuge which the cast-off servant sought,

but will receive you in your hours of weakness and sorrow into their very heart of hearts, will bear you with them when they are kneeling in the presence of their Father.

That most important hint or digression connects the meaning and moral of the parable with the coming age, makes it an explanation of some of the contradictory facts in the history of Christendom—the position, habits, and influence of Jews in the modern world being of course not the least remarkable—and enforces it with especial emphasis upon any nation which is brought into contact with others in merchandise or government, and which has a large store of the mammon of unrighteousness, a great disposition to worship it. But we must not let our Lord's passing commendation of the steward, valuable as it is in bringing out the sense of the parable, cause us to forget that he proceeds at once to the words, "He that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much; and if ye have been unfaithful with the unrighteous mammon, who shall commit to you the true riches?" or that he then introduces a sentence apparently out of all connection with what has gone before: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the law to fail. Whoso putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her that is put away, committeth adultery."

I apprehend that this association of thoughts, puzzling as it may seem to an ordinary critic, is one which the conscience of the hearer will not have been slow to recognize and justify. Mammon-worship was becoming the only worship of the Jew; his subsequent history was already foreshadowed in the tendencies of that time. Before he could obtain the true inward riches, the riches of the heavenly kingdom, he must have some sense of the responsibility attaching to his outward treasures; he must know that they are not his own. Ever since John's time the message about the kingdom of heaven had been stirring men's hearts mightily; there had been a pressure into it; a craving to

know what it was. And those who did desire this knowledge with all their hearts would obtain it ; the violent would take it by force. But there were a number who thought the kingdom of heaven a mere kingdom of privileges, where the rigidness of the law would be relaxed, where men would be permitted licenses which they had not under Moses and the prophets. Far indeed was that from being the case. One tittle of the law could not fail. Nay, there were privileges and permissions granted under that law which in the kingdom of heaven could have no place. The law would be fulfilled, for instance, by a more severe enforcement of the bond of marriage—that bond which Jews and Gentiles at this time were so continually breaking—than it had been wise or possible for Moses to make. Thus St. Luke fulfils his own special task. While he is denouncing the sins and foretelling the judgment of the Old Dispensation, he is asserting the principles and conditions of the New ; he is showing how essentially that dispensation would be one of inward and universal principle and practice, not of strict rule and occasional exceptions.

But I said that the second parable could not be separated from the first. That the Gentile world is set forth in Lazarus, the Jewish nation in the man clothed with purple and fine linen, has been an old belief, which a careful student of the Gospel as an orderly narrative can hardly avoid ; but which, as in the case of the Prodigal Son, has been encountered by the witness in the consciences of Christians, that the story must be meant for themselves. If I had the least notion that it applied less directly to us, because it brought out the contrast with which the Evangelist is always busy, and applied that contrast to the hearts of the Jews who were standing round our Lord, I should suspect myself and better interpreters of a mistake, if the evidence were ever so strong in our favor. But I apprehend the ordinary way of looking at the parable, as if it were merely a story about two individual men—of making it in fact not a parable at all,—destroys the point of it as bearing upon our own lives, and gives us excuses for escaping from its warnings. For we say to our-

selves, that after all it is only a story. Having asserted its literal meaning, we are afraid of taking it literally, lest we should sanction opinions about the state and feelings of the departed which we think unsafe. I am far from pronouncing that they would be unsafe, or from sanctioning the dangerous notion that we are to shrink from the strictest meaning of Scripture, lest it should involve us in Romish opinions or any other. But I am satisfied that the English public do not take the words plainly and simply as the record of a fact; and therefore they cannot complain of any who are influenced by a consideration of the context to regard it as a parable respecting races and dispensations, believing that in this way the individual truth and moral of it will be only the more apparent. Certainly the words "purple and fine linen," would naturally denote to any Jew the garments of the king and the priest; the being carried by angels into Abraham's bosom, the adoption into the covenant which God made with Abraham. This would be the ordinary strict way of interpreting a parable; to follow its symbols carefully, and render them according to the nature of the subject from which they are drawn. By doing so, I apprehend we understand the covetousness of Dives in its heights and in its depths; the covetousness of religious privileges which he valued because others were not the sharers of them; the covetousness which made money the standard of worth, the conditions under which it was held the rule by which all blessings were measured. To say that this was the habit of a nation, is not surely to say that it was not the habit of a given individual in that nation, any more than we say that an actual dog may not have licked an actual beggar's sores, because we take that to be a beautiful symbol of the sympathy which outward nature, and the animal creation, expressed for those whom God's chosen witnesses were neglecting; of the witness they bore of His care and love to hearts which could have received no impression respecting Him from those who were sent into the world to declare His name, and show forth His image, except that He was exclusive, capricious, hard-hearted. Nor can I see how the belief that the para-

ble speaks of the translation of the other nations to the privileges of which the Jews showed themselves unmindful, takes away the edge of its application to those nations, seeing that five brethren are spoken of who might come into the same place of torment into which their elder brother had come, unless they took warning from the judgment upon his covetousness and cruelty. And if the highest punishment which could reach him was to be excluded from the office he had abused, to be stripped of his priestly and royal robes, to be left to feel what a gulf his covetousness had put between him and whatever was pure and loving in the past or the present, I cannot understand how this lesson bears less directly upon each one of us, who under whatever color is making self an idol, because we feel that it also bears upon the state and destiny of Christendom and of every Church in it.

CHAPTER XVII.

This parable has taught us that the sin of the New Dispensation would be the same as that of the Old. The covetousness of the Jew had caused offences innumerable; the same cause would always produce the same effects; "It is impossible but that offences will come; but woe unto him through whom they come!" Thus I connect the first paragraph of this chapter, and the lesson respecting the means of avoiding offences which we have considered at large in St. Matthew, with the general subject of our Lord's discourses on his way to Jerusalem.

The passage follows, "And the Apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. And the Lord said, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say unto this sycamine-tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you. But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and after-

ward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do. And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee." This passage is found only in St. Luke, with the exception of the words, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed," which has been noticed among the passages that are common to all the Evangelists. I have often had occasion to remark that the habit of mind which our Lord was denouncing in the Jews generally, displayed itself in various forms in the Apostles, and that he was destroying those seeds of it in them which would have made them utterly unfit to testify against it in their countrymen. Their prayer for an increase of faith, plausible as it sounded, He seems to tell us was itself mixed with covetous desires, which are the great antagonists of faith. They wanted to have a great amount of faith, not that they might serve God with it, but themselves. They wanted faith as a something upon which they could plume themselves, and which would set them above others; they must learn that God gives men faith that they may do His work, not that they may have a feast of their own.

We are especially reminded that the miracle of healing the ten lepers was on the way to Jerusalem. The facts of it serve better than many discourses, as an intimation to the Jew of that fact which had already been announced in the parable of the Good Samaritan, that there was more openness of heart to receive God's loving-kindness in those who were outside the nation and excluded from many of its privileges, than in those who had them all. The importance of the lesson for St. Luke's design, and especially for this part of his narrative, does not need to be pointed out.

If the following passage were not so remarkably illustrative of this design, I might be tempted to dwell upon it for another purpose, because it so strikingly confirms that view of the coming

of the Son of Man, and of the revelation of His Kingdom, which I deduced from the account of the last days in the three Evangelists. St. Luke has brought here several of the passages which the other two introduce into the discourse respecting the temple and its goodly buildings. He introduces them in answer to a demand of the Pharisees, "When the kingdom of God should come?" The answer is, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." The passage is often quoted; few perhaps in our day so often. But it is always quoted with a reservation, that there is a kingdom of God without as well as within, and that all the passages in the Gospels which refer to the coming of the Son of Man, speak of that outward kingdom, not of the other. How does this doctrine accord with the context of the words? St. Luke immediately proceeds to use that very language, which occurs elsewhere, as the description of the coming of the Son of Man, as if it were a part of His answer to the Pharisees, and was to expand and explain His condemnation of their materialism. What can we infer from these words, but that the great events in the outward world were to discover that kingdom which was not to come with observation; that they would bring to light that kingdom which is within, lying at the very root of each man's being and of the being of society, the order which God had established in the beginning, and which, on the breaking up of the outer fabric of the Jewish polity, would come forth in new power? That the gospel of the Spirit should set forth this truth we might well expect; that the Evangelist of the new and human dispensation should record the words which declare its nature, and its permanent eternal foundation, cannot be strange; that such an announcement of the new and true Jerusalem should accompany the series of warnings which were preparing Christ's disciples for His rejection in the old, at least gives a consistency and awefulness to the words befitting Him who is said to have uttered them.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It is needless to inquire at any time upon what principle the dividers of chapters in the New Testament proceeded. I presume they had a notion that parables were in some measure to be sorted together, and to be separated, when it was possible, from discourses not of their nature ; else one could not account for a parable that men ought always to pray, and not to faint, being disjoined from the previous warnings respecting the coming of the Son of Man, even though it concludes with the words, "Nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Unquestionably they had a right to think that this parable has a worth of its own apart from any of its incidents ; that it describes the very impulse to prayer, the consciousness of being haunted and tormented by an adversary ; that it shows how men must and will pray so long as they have a notion that there is a Judge of the earth at all, even though they think that He is an unfeeling and indifferent one ; and that all the deepest encouragement to prayer lies in the belief that He is one who cares to set them free from their oppressor. But this everlasting significance is realized a thousand times more, if we suppose that there was a crisis when every thing looked dark and terrible ; when the Son of Man seemed to have deserted the earth over which He had brooded for so many generations, and which He had at last visited as one of its inhabitants ; when His disciples looked and looked in vain for a glimpse of His day ; when the adversary seemed quite invincible, and judges and rulers to regard neither God nor man. And if then, just then when all hearts were waxing feeble and tongues cleaving to the roof of the mouth, there came an actual revelation amidst thunders and lightnings of Christ's power and presence and permanent royalty ;—that would be a consolation indeed to men in all ages, that would be an encouragement to God's elect to cry day and night even in the most oppressive circumstances of their lives,

since they might be certain that He was hearing them and about to answer them when He seemed to bear longest with them.

St. Luke had used the words "His own elect." Could there be better, more genial, more encouraging words? If a man does not look upon himself as called by God, what strength can he have to pray? How can he ask for deliverance if he does not believe that God wills to deliver him, and that his adversary who seeks to destroy him is God's adversary? But was there no danger accompanying this righteous and necessary confidence? Might it not lead a man to despise others, to glorify himself? If it should take that effect upon him, what effect would it have upon his prayer? Our Lord answers the question in a parable which must always be looked upon as the necessary pendant to the other. If a man does think that he is not like other men, he cannot pray; he is conscious of no adversary; he is not flying to a judge from that adversary. Unless he says, "God be merciful to me a sinner," unless he takes the lowest place among men and seeks deliverance as a man, and not as better than other men, he does not know what he wants to be set free from, he does not know who is to set him free; he has no faith, his conscience has no justification. What a paradox is here! The elect man must look upon himself as one with all other men, else he cannot feel that God is hearing him, God is justifying him. A man who stands upon his separation, cannot feel that God has called him or has any thing to do with him; his very effort to separate himself from the world, proves that he belongs to the world; for what is the world in its evil sense, but a set of individuals who are trying to set themselves one above another, to sever themselves one from another? It is a paradox surely, the paradox of Christianity, the one which we shall find the Apostle of the Gentiles continually bringing before us, the one which has caused the greatest perplexity and confusion to the readers of his epistles who have thought that they could clear him of the difficulty by getting rid of one or the other of the facts which he acknowledged and which I think we shall find he reconciled.

I have given full scope to the wish of readers that this last

parable should have an universal character, for I have not even noticed the circumstance, which scarcely any one passes over, that the persons in it are a Pharisee and a Publican. That circumstance at once connects it with the general subject of these discourses, the discovery of that falsehood in the Jew by which he was perverting and inverting the purpose of God in calling him, so bringing down that exclusion upon himself which he supposed that God desired for all others. The passages which follow, to the 30th verse, have been commented upon at some length already. What I said of them generally, will explain their special suitableness to this place.

I have also spoken of the passage beginning with the 31st verse; but I would notice it here as one of a number of allusions to the going up to Jerusalem which give a peculiarly pathetic character to these chapters, and which do not suffer us to forget to what object it is that every warning, encouragement, and event, is subordinate. The last incident has a touching connection with the ignorance of the disciples spoken of in the 34th verse. How it was that their Master should be scourged and spitted on and put to death, the disciples could not understand; nor will any words, even Christ's own, teach a man, Jew or Christian, how the great King should be the great sufferer. Suffering must teach him. The blind man who cried, "Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me," and whom the disciples would not permit to approach Him, discovered for himself, teaches us, that only He who is a brother of man in his sorrows, can be his Lord and deliverer.

CHAPTER XIX.

I cannot help connecting the opening story of this chapter with the concluding one of the last. The old notion of Zacchæus as an extortioner whom our Lord reformed by His divine Spirit, though it has been thrown aside by some modern interpreters, is, I think, the most consistent with the facts of the story. The

Pharisees were too well used to our Lord's intercourse with publicans, to be struck with any common instance of the kind. If they said, "He is gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner," the natural inference, in the absence of other evidence, is that he was worse than his class, that he had notoriously got his riches by means which were common but not universal in it. The words of Zacchæus certainly do not diminish this probability; they have all the air and effect of a new resolution; no one would fancy from them that he had *not* taken any thing from any man by false accusation. Our Lord's words therefore, "This day has salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham," would express at once a recognition of an outcast class as included in the covenant, and an assurance that the great blessing of the covenant was deliverance or salvation from the sin by which the children of Abraham were kept from God. That the particular sin in this case was the one which our Lord had been bringing home to Pharisees and to the whole nation, and which He had foretold as the cause of its coming ruin, gives an emphasis to this moral miracle, and shows why it should have been associated with the physical miracle of healing the blind man, as an attestation of the kingship which Jesus would claim on His entrance into the city. If this is not the purport of the story, it would seem too unimportant to record at so memorable a crisis of the history as the one we have reached.

Again, we are told that He spake a parable because He was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God would immediately appear. This parable is often compared with the one in the 25th chapter of St. Matthew, called the Ten Talents. The obvious differences between them are, that there various sums are given to the servants, that here one pound is given to each; that there the reward to the servants who had improved their money by trading, is entering into the joy of their Lord, here it is having dominion over ten or five cities; that there is no allusion to any revolt of citizens or to their being punished, that here, as in the case of St. Matthew's parable of the king making a marriage for his son, these are con-

spicuous and capital incidents. In fact, it seems to me that the rest of the parable must be looked at in subordination to them. The journey to Jerusalem and the solemn preparations for it, had led the disciples to suppose that then there would be some great display of Christ's kingdom, nay, that it would be actually set up. The answer is, "No. First of all there will be a message from the citizens, 'we will not have this man to reign over us.' Then there will be an intermediate period during which different servants of the king will be endued with a power which they may either neglect or cultivate; then there will be a trial of each of them to see what he has done; then there will be a judgment upon the citizens. All this will happen before the kingdom is established." All this I believe corresponded precisely to the period before the Ascension; to the Apostolic age, after the gift of the Spirit; to the events preceding the destruction of Jerusalem; to its overthrow. Whether the parable loses any of its force for the later Christian Church from this immediate application, must depend on the estimate we form of the endowments of that Church. If every one of its members, besides any particular talents fitting him for some particular occupation, receives the higher and general gift of an indwelling Spirit, his responsibility for that treasure cannot be less because Christians who received it in the intermediate age, when the Old Dispensation was passing away and the New had not fully come, were called to account for their stewardship of it; receiving in proportion to the profit they had made of it greater powers of usefulness, more extensive government over their fellows, or being utterly deprived of that which they had, and which they treated as if it was a semblance, not a reality. Only upon the supposition that the Church for eighteen hundred years has been left barren of that which is said in Scripture to constitute its very essence, does this parable, however exquisitely and strictly appropriate to the apostolic times, cease to be a guide for ours.

At this place we come to the great meeting-point of the different Evangelists, the descent from the Mount of Olives. St. Luke has given us a more obvious and direct preparation for that

event than either of the others. In one important particular he enlarges the history of it: "I tell you," says our Lord to the Pharisees, complaining of the disciples for their hosannas, "if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." And those words are explained by the tears which He sheds immediately after when He comes near the city and beholds it. Within a few years the stones of the city which were held together by the praises of the babes and sucklings, would indeed cry out: "For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

CHAPTERS XX. XXI. XXII. XXIII.

In the first two of these chapters there is nothing of which I have not spoken at some length. The account of the last Supper in the 22d chapter contains three memorable peculiarities. First, the institution of the new feast is distinguished from the participation of the old far more markedly than by the other Evangelists. The words, "I say unto you, I will not eat any more of this passover, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God," and, "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come," are said with great distinctness after He had eaten the unleavened bread and handed round the paschal lamb, and before He took bread and gave thanks, saying, "This is my body which is given for you," and the cup, saying, "This is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." I can conceive no more decisive proof of the fact that St. Luke was, and felt himself to be, in a peculiar sense the Evangelist of the New Dispensation, than this difference furnishes. The second is not equally important, but still, I think, highly significant. St. Luke speaks of a strife among them at this very feast, which of them

should be accounted the greatest. "And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The fact of such a strife as this at such a moment, is the most humbling, and therefore one of the most instructive, facts in the New Testament. First, they ask who is the betrayer; next, which of them shall take precedence of the others. To show how this feast was to break down the ideas of rivalship and precedence, even of one being the benefactor of another except in the sense of being more a servant; this was surely a fitting work for Him who had just instituted a sacrificial feast, and was Himself to be a sacrifice. Yet while *their* thoughts of power are crushed by His words and acts at once, how confidently does He promise them the real power, how He repeats all that He had ever said to them of a kingdom and their own place in it. A kingdom based on sacrifice would be actually proclaimed in the world; if they could give up themselves, they would be kings and judges in it. The third passage is the one which has caused so much perplexity to interpreters, respecting the purse, the script, and the sword, which the Apostles had not taken on their first mission, but which they would require now. I do not know that I understand the passage. But it looks to me like a reconsecration of common things which it had been proved that Christ's disciples did not want, but yet which He would hallow and adopt into His service. They had found that their Master could support them though they had none of these things; they were to depend upon His support when they had them; but the earth would be redeemed; both the ploughshare, and the sword, and

the money-bag, might be used for God in the new economy as they had been in the old. Supposing this to be the sense of the words, and it is nearly the sense which a great many have put on them, and is perhaps latent in all the Middle-age refinements and fancies respecting the two swords,—it would be in accordance with the object which we have traced through St. Luke, that he should record the conversation, as he records shortly after the mistake which the disciples made respecting the time and mode of using the sword, and our Lord's practical correction of it.

In the account of the Arraignment and of the Passion in the 23d chapter, St. Luke has several important variations. First, he alone records our Lord's being sent to Herod. Secondly, it is he who relates the words to the daughters of Jerusalem on the way to Calvary. Thirdly, it is he who gives the words on the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Fifthly, he tells the story of the penitent malefactor. Finally, he relates the words, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." I merely record these differences for your own meditation. A thoughtful and devout reader does not wish for many words upon such a topic; he will have learnt in better ways, than through any teaching of mine, what the power and worth of these passages in the narrative are. I only suggest to him, that instead of being breaks in the narrative of St. Luke, or accidental additions to it, they harmonize most strikingly with the structure and purpose of the Gospel; so that if the narrative of either of the other Evangelists were substituted for it, we should feel, though we might not know why, a shock and jar in our minds; I am sure that it is so, though I might not be able to illustrate my meaning without going into refinements which I should wish to avoid, and which might hurt the reader's inner perception more than they cultivated his understanding. But it can do no harm to make the remark, which every reader has probably made for himself, that an Evangelist who recorded the story of the woman who wept at the feet of Jesus, and the parable of the Prodigal Son, was the one from whom one would have expected to hear the words, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," which

St. Matthew, I conceive, for the best and wisest reasons, was not suffered to record or to know.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The whole story of the journey to Emmaus in this chapter belongs exclusively to St. Luke. I think a great many have felt and confessed, that this story has led them, more than any other, to an apprehension of a risen Lord, and of the kind of communication which might have existed between Him and His disciples; very different from what it had been before the Passion, but different in being more real, more intimate, mixed with greater awe, yet producing a greater glow and warmth of heart, rarer in words, communicating deeper instruction, making that which had been heard dimly before intelligible, diffusing peace, enabling the heart to enter into mysteries which had been floating vaguely about it. The sense of a body delivered from the chains of death, essentially the same as it was before, using naturally as its own, powers which had been hidden or had only occasionally come forth, is one part, not the only or perhaps the chief part, of the revelation. Its capacity of vanishing and of reappearing is felt to indicate the possibility of a spiritual presence, which may be continually near, and in which men may be meant ever to abide.

Now, if this is the impression which St. Luke's words make on us, they carry us beyond the forty days after the Resurrection. They leave upon our minds a certainty that we are at the beginning, not the end of a history. If there has been a Resurrection, we feel there must be an Ascension. Men have believed it. Why? Because there was a great array of external proofs and evidences to confirm it? Where are they? Who has ever found them, or believed any stupendous fact of this kind, upon the strength of them? Men have for eighteen hundred years accepted the fact of the Ascension upon the testimony of this one Evangelist, confirmed by the few words of St. Mark, because it was not an incredible thing to those once believing in a Son of

God, and King of men, that it should be so ; but incredible that it should not be so ; incredible that He should be bound by any chains of space and time, that He should not have led captivity to them captive, that He should not be as actual and personal, as when He was loaded with those fetters which hinder us from realizing our personality, from being what we feel we are meant to be ; that He should not be actually at the right hand of God, actually the bond of union and fellowship among men. The Evangelist of the New Dispensation casts forth this belief upon the world, asking no special homage to his own authority, producing no overpowering weight of testimony to crush unbelief, announcing it as good tidings to men, which the wants of men and the wisdom of God in the generations to come would establish, though all the earthly witnesses of it should prove utterly vain and futile, though all the power and all the wisdom of the world should proclaim that God had not set His Son upon the holy hill of Sion, and that the rulers of the earth owed Him no homage.

LECTURE II.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, EPISTLES OF ST. JAMES, ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL.

Acts
ROMANS I. 1—4.

The Gospel of God, which He had promised afore by His Prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

Most persons are struck with the very great prominence which is given to the life and journeys of St. Paul in the Acts of the Apostles. They do not wonder at such a peculiarity in a writer whom they have always heard of as the companion of St. Paul. It was natural enough that all the twelve who were so conspicuous in the Gospels should sink to nothing in his eyes before the teacher of the Gentiles from whom he had imbibed his wisdom, with whom he had lived and suffered. "But does not this importance attached to the person of a man, who was not marked out by our Lord while on earth as one of the heralds of His kingdom, belie the title of the book, clash with other parts of the New Testament, and indicate that there was a distinct Pauline element in the Church, which interfered with the authority if not with the doctrine of the elder Apostles, though awkward attempts might be made in later times to bring them into harmony, and though through the artifice of later compilers or some tendency

to compromise in the mind of Luke himself, the early part of the book was brought in to qualify the later?" Some such questions as these may have suggested themselves to the minds of readers in all ages; they have in recent days taken a formal shape, and are entitled to the most grave consideration.

I think I have in a measure considered them already. I have admitted most distinctly the difference between St. Luke and St. Matthew as Evangelists: I have inquired wherein that difference consists, so far as its nature can be ascertained from a careful comparison of the two documents as they have come down to us. The difference has seemed not to be this, that St. Matthew affirms less distinctly, less uniformly than St. Luke, that Jesus is the Son of God and the King of men; but that the one exhibits His Sonship especially in the acknowledgment of a divine Father, the other in the gift of a divine Spirit to men; that the one looks upon Christ's kingdom as the fulfilment of a peculiar dispensation, the other as the form of a universal one. In the first a Hebrew character was visible; a human character was shining through that. In the latter, the great object seemed to be to present the Gospel-kingdom as the kingdom *originally* designed for mankind. At the same time we have found St. Luke, not once or twice, not by accident, but continuously, through his whole Gospel, and especially through that long and memorable series of discourses which follows the account of the Transfiguration, connecting all intimations respecting the future with Jerusalem, with the claim of Jesus to be King over that city, and with the rejection of that claim by its rulers.

Supposing these points to have been made out, supposing this to have been the continuous tenor of St. Luke's first treatise, I cannot find it at all out of place, I cannot trace the signs of patch-work in the fact, that the new treatise should open with the Ascension, which St. Luke appeared to regard as the necessary sequel to the Resurrection, as the proof of Christ's claim to universal dominion; or that the witnesses to that Ascension should be the Apostles whom He had chosen; or that these Apostles should feel it necessary to complete the number which

our Lord had originally fixed, and which answered to the twelve tribes of Israel; or that they should be met at a great Jewish festival at which men were gathered from all parts of the Roman and Parthian empires; or that the descent of the Spirit should be declared to be the witness of the Sonship and Kingdom of Jesus; or that this Spirit should be said to manifest Himself by enabling Galilæans so to speak of the wonderful works of God, as to make themselves understood by the keepers of the feast each in the dialect wherein he was born; or that the society which had this early pledge of universality, should yet be limited for a time to the city in which it came into existence; or that it should prove its humanity there by no man counting that which he had as his own; or that it should spread; or that different circumstances, apparently accidental, should lead to exercises of discipline in the new community; or to its more perfect organization; or that a deacon should discover even before an apostle that the temple and the customs which Moses delivered would not always continue; or that he should be the first martyr of the new kingdom; or that his death should be the means of spreading it into Samaria; or that being there it should pass soon into Syria; or that a Hebrew of the Hebrews should be filled with intense rage against the new church for breaking down the barrier between Jews and the outlying world; or that he should be taught by revelation that he was a sinner as much as the Gentiles, and that Gentiles had a share in Christ as well as himself; or that yet another apostle, not the friend and teacher of St. Luke, should be the first preacher to the Gentiles, he having been taught that what God had cleansed he was not to call common; or that Saul should be for a long time learning at Antioch in a society of Jews sprinkled with some Greeks, and beginning to be known by the name of Christians, what his work was to be; or that at last he should be directly designated to that work; or that thenceforth the history of the way in which he declared a universal kingdom to Roman governors in Cyprus, to Lycaonian savages, to the Asiatic Greeks, to Macedonians, to philosophical Athenians, to the worshippers of Aphro-

dite in Corinth, to the worshippers of Diana in Ephesus, should be the main subject of the book; that it should be illustrated by a narrative of his journey to Jerusalem, to defend the rights of the Gentiles to the privileges of the new covenant, without their being compelled to submit to the form of the old; that it should contain the account of another journey to Jerusalem, in which he declared that Christ had commanded him to go to the Gentiles, and thus drew upon himself the conspiracy of zealots and the condemnation of the high priest; or that the historian should dwell upon his examinations before Gentile governors till at last he was brought a prisoner to the Capital of the world.

I cannot conceive a more orderly and coherent history than this, one of which all the parts explain themselves more naturally by that fundamental idea which we have traced in the writer's mind. That his circumstances as a companion of St. Paul fitted him to be the writer of such a history, I have not denied, but eagerly asserted. Only I cannot discover that his personal friendship drew him one step from the line and object of his history. If he wished to describe how a human kingdom, which had been lying at the root of the Jewish kingdom, unfolded itself by the will of God through human agents, through human opposition—how men were prepared to assist in its establishment by a series of divine arrangements which they could not control, and very imperfectly understood—this would certainly be the kind of narrative we should look for, one which puts no honor upon individual men, which exhibits their errors and weaknesses, which shows how mighty they became when they confessed a calling and were content to fulfil it.

That the name, Acts of the Apostles, very inadequately describes the nature of this book I am ready to admit. If we look for biographies of the eleven whom St. Luke, as much as any other Evangelist, says that our Lord called to be ministers of His kingdom, to sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, we are utterly disappointed. We must trust to vague ecclesiastical traditions for reports of the countries into which they travelled, of the mode in which they preached, of the deaths

which they died. The Scriptural Historian is silent on these points. He speaks very little even of those whom our Lord honored with the most special signs of His favor. Andrew is not mentioned except in the list in the first chapter. The martyrology of James the brother of John is contained in a single sentence. The beloved disciple himself is only mentioned in conjunction with St. Peter as healing the impotent man, once as appearing before the Sanhedrim, once in Samaria.

These omissions are, I conceive, the most decisive evidence of a purpose which cannot be lost sight of for a moment, to gratify the curiosity of any reader. Whatever concerns the growth of the universal society out of the Jewish is carefully and minutely noted. The works of human agents are referred to just so far as they are necessary for the illustration of this subject; the highest honor that could be paid an apostle was to suppose that he lived and died only for the kingdom of God, and that if he fulfilled the work which was given him to do, he cared nothing whether his name was written in brass or utterly obliterated.

This second treatise of St. Luke is invaluable as an introduction to the Epistles of the New Testament; not because it supplies a great many particulars respecting the lives of the writers which we could not gather from themselves; (for their letters are their best biographies;) but because it removes an impression respecting them which we fall into very naturally, and which I believe grievously darkens their meaning to us. We assume that they are intended to set forth the Christian religion; by which words we very commonly understand a certain doctrine concerning the state after death, and the means by which a man may make that state a blessed one for himself. Having assumed this to be the great subject of the Epistles, we inquire with much earnestness how it comes that these documents, which are to be the guides of our thought and conduct, should present views apparently so diverse; how one apostle should speak of faith as that which saves, another should say, "Can faith save?" These words seem to bewilder the inquirer on the very point on which he is most earnest for information. A man thoroughly pos-

sessed with the one truth, feeling it to be the very staff of his life, the ground of the Church's existence, indignantly rejects the other ; no canonical authority can induce him to bear with it. Less energetic men feel that there is some truth implied in both assertions, and cannot persuade themselves to cast away either, though it is only at certain periods of their lives that the ingenious explanations of divines really take hold of them and are practically adopted. Bolder thinkers, falling on a critical age, are ready enough to accept the solution which seems to them far simpler, that those who enunciated such different propositions were heads of opposing schools or factions, each maintaining its own theory of the way in which the rewards of a future life were to be secured.

Now without at present considering any of these suggestions, we are bound to say that if we take the simple words of St. Luke for our guide, still more the context of his history, we shall not accept the popular statement as expressing adequately the views which any of these apostles can have entertained of his divine function. The book which we call the Acts of the Apostles, so far as we have been able to consider it, is the history of a kingdom actually set up in this world, not limited to it undoubtedly, by its very nature and principle connecting the visible with the invisible, the temporary with the eternal, the earthly with the heavenly, the human with the divine ; but not referring to the future more than to the present. The preaching of every Apostle and teacher of the church, so far as St. Luke reports it, tends to the same conclusion. When St. Peter opens his lips on the day of Pentecost, it is to declare that Jesus, whom the rulers of the Jews had given up to be crucified, was both Lord and Christ ; that the Son of God was risen from the dead, because it was not possible that death could hold him. But those who were pricked to the heart by these words were not told of some distant punishment or distant blessedness : they were told to repent and be baptized that they might receive remission of their sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost ; they were told to save themselves from *that* untoward generation. So again, when St. Peter is address-

ing those who were wondering at the miracle upon the lame man, he tells them that all the prophets had foretold of *these* days ; he speaks of God fulfilling the covenant which He had made to Abraham, that in him all the kindreds of the earth should be blessed ; he speaks of God having raised up His Son Jesus to bless them and turn away every one of them from his iniquities. He speaks, that is, of a present blessing, of an immediate deliverance ; of future blessings and future deliverances only so far as they were implied in this, and were the results of it. The joy and singleness of heart which is said to have distinguished the first community at Jerusalem, arose, if we are to judge from St. Luke's account, from the feeling that they were then brothers of each other, and of a common Lord, not from some dreams or calculations of what might happen to them in another world. Their thanksgiving and prayer when they went from the Sanhedrim to their own company, when the house was shaken where they were assembled, arose from their conviction that Jesus was that King of whom David had spoken, against whom the Gentiles had gathered together and the people imagined a vain thing, of whose kingdom they were to testify by acts and words of healing ; language surely denoting the joy in an accomplished deliverance which they were permitted to declare to others as well as themselves, not the expectation of some good which they might receive, of some evil which they might escape, after death. Stephen when his face shone as an angel's we might suppose would dwell much upon the prospects which awaited him ; but his defence is a history of the gradual manifestation of God's kingdom upon earth, and of his countrymen's resistance to it. The sight which cheers him before he falls asleep is of Christ standing at the right hand of God, a Conqueror and a King. The great joy which Philip the deacon causes to the Samaritans, is not by telling them of what shall be, but of that which is, by preaching Christ to them the giver of that Spirit, the living power of which the enchanter had tried to imitate, and would have been glad to purchase. The revelation to St. Paul who had cried, "Who shall deliver me from the body

of this death?" and who in the school of Gamaliel may have been continually exercised with questions concerning a world to come, was not of some means by which he could better his state hereafter, but of Jesus the deliverer from present sin, from an evil conscience which abode with him; of Jesus who had brought reconciliation to Gentile as well as Jew. And therefore when he speaks most awfully in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia, of the fear lest if his countrymen continued despisers they might wonder and perish, the message he delivers is, "that a work has been worked in *these* days which they would not believe, and that God had fulfilled the promise which he had made the fathers, to them their children"—Jesus being raised from the dead, not as we might expect He would say, to prove that they would rise, but as a proof that He was the only-begotten Son, to whom were given the sure mercies of David. To the Lycaonians Paul does not speak of punishments or rewards hereafter, but of God who made the world and had been doing them good, and was now bidding them turn from their vanities to serve Him. To the Athenians he speaks of a God in whom they were *then* living, and moving, and having their being, of men being His offspring, of His having winked at their ignorance, but now of His calling upon all men to repent. He adds, no doubt, "because He has appointed a day in which He will judge the world by that Man whom he has ordained, whereof He has given assurance in that He has raised Him from the dead." A very clear assertion that a judgment was coming upon the earth, and that all men, the wise and the unwise, the worshippers of gods known and unknown, would be subject to it. But certainly not the kind of information respecting the future which those who had heard of a Tartarus and an Elysium, and would have welcomed any new doctrine about either, would have expected from the new teacher. A present God, a present King, a present Judge, was his proclamation here and everywhere.

If you keep these remarks in recollection, you will be prepared, I think, to read the letters of the Apostles, and to find that in them, as in their preaching, the doctrine has reference to an ac-

tual kingdom to which men were invited to belong, or of which they had already become members. If so, we ought to understand the positions of the different writers in reference to this kingdom; that knowledge may remove some perplexities and contradictions which we have tried in vain by other means to clear away. There are, so far as we know, but five writers who have contributed to the canon of the New Testament besides the Evangelists; St. James the less, his brother St. Jude, St. Peter, St. Paul and St. John. I take them in the order in which I have named them. I put St. James first, because it is evident, from the 15th and 21st chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, that he occupied that position which all antiquity has assigned him, that either because the other Apostles had left Jerusalem, or from some cause unknown to us, he became the overseer of the Mother-Church of the world. I proceed at once to inquire what aspect of the Gospel his Epistle presents to us.

ST. JAMES.

It has been shown I think clearly, that this Epistle cannot have been written to qualify or counteract any hard sayings in the Epistles of St. Paul; that they were directed to quite different persons, that those who read the one in the first century were not likely to read the other, that in all probability that of St. James was the earlier in point of time. These facts, however, do not prove that there is not a very great difference between the mind and objects of the two Apostles. The difference presents itself to us on the surface of their letters. We shall understand it more completely the more we penetrate into the heart of them. The question we have to consider is, whether this difference affects the unity of the books of the New Testament in their testimony to Christ and to His Church? Is St. James in his Epistle *not* speaking of a Son of God? Is it *not* the leading idea which he is bringing out before us?

St. James calls himself a servant of Jesus Christ. The name

occurs but two or three times in the letter. That is one of its most remarkable peculiarities. Next he writes to the twelve tribes; whatever we may say in this day about the loss of ten tribes, and the restoration of two, he recognizes no such distinction. He regards the Jewish nation as a whole, constituted as it was originally in the descendants of Jacob. But why, you may ask, does he the Christian address himself to a nation the greater part of which had rejected Jesus as their king? I can only take the words as I find them. He writes to the twelve tribes. He at the same time confesses himself distinctly the servant of Jesus Christ. It is the fact, whether I understand it or not. But I own at the same time that I could not understand his taking any other course. He felt that his belief in Jesus Christ was the sign of his being a true Israelite. That belief enabled him to appreciate his position. What he desired was, that his brethren should understand and appreciate their position; that they should feel themselves to be indeed twelve tribes, a united nation, and that they should understand how and why they were so. Instead therefore of making them insensible to their privileges, his great desire was that they should be more alive to them, more ready to acknowledge what was involved in them.

Do I suppose then that he was addressing himself only to those who had *not* been baptized into the holy Name, who did not confess Jesus to be the Christ? I suppose no such thing. He could not exclude the Jewish believers from the twelve tribes, if he had wished it. They gloried in their national position. He had taught them to prize it. And he could make the best use of their claim to share the privileges and responsibilities of the Old Covenant. He could make it the best means of instructing them in the nature and principles of the new.

It is evidently assumed that those whom he was addressing were passing or were likely to pass through great afflictions. That circumstance would not in the least limit the application of the letter to converts. They often suffered much from their countrymen, but not sorer trials than the whole body of Israelites

underwent in every part of the empire during the quarter of a century immediately before the destruction of the city. St. James addresses these sufferers, whoever they were, in most paradoxical language. "Count it all joy," he says, "when ye fall into divers temptations." Our translators, I conceive, have adopted a right word, though they have often been censured for not preferring another. St. James's meaning is lost if we suppose that the *trials* of which he speaks were not *temptations*. Those who were brought into them would be tempted to distrust God, to think that He had deserted them. And because they would be so tempted, the state into which they were come was a good one for them. For if there was an enemy who was turning their circumstances to the ruin of their faith, there was a friend who was using them for awakening and calling forth their faith. God who was ordering all things for them was not tempting them to *evil;* let none of them fancy that. He was cultivating their trust and their patience. Their own lusts were drawing them aside and enticing them. But every gift was coming down, good and perfect, from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness or shadow of turning.

Here is the beginning of St. James's message to the twelve tribes. The God of Abraham, the God of their fathers, is the source of perfect unmixed good. No evil can come from Him. Every circumstance which befalls them is to be welcomed as His instrument for conferring good upon them. They are yielding to something else than him, something opposite to Him, if any thing that befalls them leads them wrong. No lesson could be so necessary for a Jew of that time. If he had believed in Jesus of Nazareth, he had need to be reminded of this truth; for it was the only foundation on which His belief could rest. If he had not believed, the truth remained a truth. To acknowledge it was the first step to the confession of Jesus as the Christ.

St. James goes on: "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." Every thing is here referred to the will of God as the ground of their calling. They had not chosen themselves; He

had chosen them. The assertion would be recognized by every Jew acquainted with his own Scriptures as describing the source from which their covenant and history were derived. A believing Jew was bound still more thankfully to refer every privilege to this origin. But how would it be with the next word, He *begat* us? Evidently the idea of paternity introduces itself here. A believer in Jesus would say at once, if he understood the meaning of his baptism, the glory of the new covenant; "Yes, we have not merely the calling of servants, but the adoption of children." Still there was nothing in such language which a reader of Isaiah or Malachi could stumble at. "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me;" "Have we not all one Father?" How can such words be realized, how can we claim the I AM, Him in whose sight the angels are not pure, as our Father? This was the question which St. James would have wished to excite in the readers of the prophets; he would have wished equally that the members of the Church should feel that they had not some special privilege then for the first time by some new and magical operation conferred upon them, but that their highest privilege was fully to know that relation which God had been gradually revealing to their fathers, without which they could not understand or act out their position as Israelites.

St. James adds, "they were begotten by the word of truth." I do not at all insist upon this expression being interpreted as an Alexandrian Jew would of course have interpreted it, by the great passage in the 8th chapter of the book of Proverbs; I do not insist that the word of truth must mean a person. St. James might not intend directly to raise that question by *his* language; it had been raised already by the language of the Old Testament. The Jews were full of conscious questionings whether the Word or Wisdom who was with the Lord as one brought up with Him, and whose delights from the first had been with the sons of men, must not be a living bond between men and God, the organ of all spiritual communications. Taking the phrase in its lowest sense, it imported to every Jew that the unseen God whom he

might not contemplate in any image, had held converse with his mind and heart, had spoken continually to that which was within him. Whatever *more* the word of truth may signify, it can import nothing *less* than that God by communications to His creature had brought him out of his natural darkness, his pursuit and worship of visible things, that he might be under a spiritual guidance. The circumcision of the Israelite, the cutting off of his flesh, his separation from the surrounding nations, betokened this. Lawgivers and prophets were continually explaining this as the intent of it. Surely it was most needful that the believer in Jesus should not fancy that *his* privilege was of a different kind, that he had come into a more outward economy, that he was not the subject of an inward government. At the same time St. James takes occasion to remind the Jew, that if he understood the privilege which belonged to him aright, if he claimed it according to the divine sense and interpretation of it, he could only look upon himself as begotten to be a kind of first-fruits of God's creatures. The covenant to Abraham could not be fulfilled, if in him and in his seed all the families of the earth were not blessed. But could any hint be more valuable to the converted Jew, than that his little sect of Nazarenes was only the first-fruits of a vast harvest, which would be gathered in?

Here is the great principle, as I conceive, of St. James's Epistle. Here is the truth from which all his exhortations and warnings are corollaries. It is a Jewish principle, no doubt, as I have been trying to show. But is it less an evangelical principle? Would St. James have been a more spiritual teacher if he had continually repeated the name *Jesus Christ*, instead of thus leading his countrymen to study the very nature of His government? I think if he had taken the course which his modern critics would have considered the most apostolical, and the highest proof of his advancement, he would have proved that his apprehension of the Gospel was more nominal than substantial. I do not mean, as I hope I shall presently show, that the name Jesus Christ has not a precious significance and reality, and that there were not teachers, some even who are

often carelessly classified with St. James, whose special office it was to bring out this Name in its fulness and power, to present the acts of the Man Christ Jesus as objects of faith, as uniting His work on earth to His work in heaven. But I believe that the important task which was committed to them would have been inadequately fulfilled, if there had not been a St. James to exhibit first and most prominently Him of whose mind the divine word was the utterance, that Jews might be led to ask, how all the prophecies of their old covenant, that he should one day prove Himself to be their Father, could actually and indeed be fulfilled.

Does the apparent confusion of two classes of Jews, so utterly different in all their feelings and habits of mind, seem very strange to the reader of the Epistle in our day? I dare say that it does. I do not wonder that it should be so. But I will ask him first to consider whether I am putting it into the letter, whether the superscription of it, and very much of the character of it, do not compel me to take this view of it? Next, whether each of these classes did not learn something which it was greatly concerned to learn, by means of this apparent confusion? Lastly, whether those passages which do obviously point directly to the believer in Jesus Christ, are not warnings against evils which the church was adopting and inheriting from the Jew, which there was great hazard of its preserving and transmitting, and which were most criminal in it because they were especially treasons against the Man of Sorrows.

Let us consider these questions a little. St. James goes on to say, that "as God had begotten them by the Word of truth, they should be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. They should receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which was able to save their souls. But they must be doers, not hearers only. Because whoever was only a hearer was like a man beholding the form of his generation (the original after which he was created) in a mirror, and then who went away and forgot what manner of man he was." All these exhortations arise naturally from the truth, that there was a divine Lord and

Teacher near, whose voice they were drowning with the noise of their own words and the tumult of their own passions, who was ready to implant in them the seed of a new life, after whose image they were formed, by doing whose commands they were proving that they confessed their relationship to Him and His authority over them. Such an invisible government every Jew instructed in the law of his forefathers, who entered into the meaning of the Psalms and the Prophets, acknowledged. Such was the preparation for acknowledging the divine Teacher who had spoken with human lips, but had spoken directly to the inner mind and had called upon that to submit to His government. On the other hand, how little could a believer in Jesus understand his rights and position, if he merely confessed a certain teacher who had been born at Bethlehem, and died on Cavalry, and did not own Him as the secret ruler of his heart and reins.

St. James being convinced that the believer in Jesus was the true Jew, was bound to practise all the religious observances which his position in Jerusalem enabled him to practise. The Acts of the Apostles, and the passages respecting him in Josephus, can leave no doubt upon our minds that he was, in the Jewish sense of the word, the most religious man of the city. Yet here we have him saying, that "if any man seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, that man's religion is vain;" and that "pure religion and undefiled before God is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." A more remarkable testimony, coming from such a quarter, believing or unbelieving Jews could scarcely receive. The latter, who were always tempted to make devotion consist of observances, were told that these observances themselves meant, that there was an invisible Ruler, who was conversing with the heart and exercising dominion over it. The others, who were disposed enough to make their privileges, as children of Abraham, a reason for separation from their Gentile brethren, were led at once to the inward principle and practical result, which alone made their privileges of any value.

Then follows a passage in which there is a direct allusion to the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. And what occasions this apparent departure from the general method of the Epistle? This faith, he says, is not to be held with respect of persons. For if a man came into their assemblies with a gold ring and with goodly apparel, and there came in a poor man in vile raiment, and they had respect to the man in gay clothing, and said to him, "Sit thou here in a good place," and said to the poor, "Stand thou here, or sit under his footstool," would not they be partial in themselves and judges of evil thoughts? No doubt such things had occurred and were occurring in Christian assemblies; no doubt they had excited the especial notice and contempt of unbelieving onlookers, who thought themselves great worshippers of Mammon, at once perceived the contradiction when it was presented to them in the Nazarenes. St. James at once, for the sake of both classes of his brethren, admits and proclaims the contradiction. He allows that it is much grosser in those who confess Him who was called the Carpenter's Son, who took upon him the form of a servant, than in all others. And hence he is able to show by a new argument how Jesus Christ fulfilled the law. Why ought they not, if they believed in Him, to treat any poor man as beneath them? Because he came to embody in himself, and to enable them to exhibit in themselves, the royal law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." A royal law indeed, the very law in the heart of the king, to which if they would not submit, they came under the penalty and terror of another law, a law which must be fulfilled in every point, a law of slavery; whereas they might obey the law of liberty, the law by which they would be judged, if they did not choose the other in preference to it. What a fine way of teaching a Jew the very meaning of his own book of Deuteronomy! How wonderfully does the Christian's sin become a lesson, as to the need which a Jew had of Christ, that the law might not be destroyed, but fulfilled.

The famous argument respecting faith and works follows most naturally upon all that has been said already. "What doth

it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? can faith save him?" We fancy this was a Christian temptation. It was also most emphatically a Jewish one. The instance St. James gives, explains the nature of it clearly. "Thou believest there is one God." Thou thinkest thou art not as other men are. Thou dost not worship visible things, a multitude of idols. That is excellent. The devils also believe and tremble. Faith in a God who tempts us for our good, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, who of his own will begat us, this St. James had been putting forward as the very pillar of life. It was faith and trust in a living Being, who would work in them to do all right things. But faith that there is one God, or faith that there is a Christ, or faith that Jesus is the Christ, faith not *in* a living Being but *about* one, could this save any human being? could it raise any one out of sin? could it make him better than he was before? No; like the devils he would believe and tremble, utterly separated from the Being whom he confessed, rising to no thankful apprehension or worship of Him, receiving no energy or operation from Him. Abraham believed God—not that there is one God—and so he offered Isaac his son upon the altar, because God wrought with him, and by works his faith was made perfect. For as the body without the breath is dead, as the body requires a quickening influence to make it move and exert itself, so faith which does not attach itself to a living person, and receives a vital breath from Him which enables it to work, is dead also. Faith is not and cannot be, according to St. James's way of looking at it, the spirit or quickening principle; that must be what responds to faith, God's power working in the man who trusts Him.

The next passage, on the government of the tongue, is in strict accordance with all this teaching. "What an insignificant, unevangelical subject for an Apostle to write upon," says, with his lips or with his heart some Pauline partisan. Yes, if the dominion over the inner man, the government of the heart and reins and will—which is implied in the government of the tongue, which St. James directly connects with it—belongs

to mere legal doctrine, St. James is essentially legal. But there may be persons to whom any illumination upon that subject seems in the highest degree spiritual, who feel that this is just the knowledge which takes them out of the circle of letters and laws that have reference to conduct, that merely restrains evil, and carries them to the springs and sources of all true and divine life. Here especially do we find that which St. James is so evidently endeavoring to set forth, the law of social life, whether in the nation or the Church, under the new economy or the old. It was the same unbelief in the actual government of God over the inner man, the same bitter envying and strife in the heart, which was destroying Jerusalem, which was threatening the Christian community in that day, which would threaten it in all days. All good things come from above. But the wisdom, the craft, which set them plotting one against another, was not from above, but was earthly, sensual, devilish. Yet there was the other wisdom. It was given them, though they might pervert it to evil; the wisdom which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

This clause of the Epistle ends with the law of peace, which is preserved by obedience to the divine Spirit of peace. The next opens with the question, "From whence then comes war and fighting among you?" Surely from the lusts in your members, which are striving against this Spirit of peace. Submission to this Spirit is the secret of all quietness; resistance to it, of all discord within and without. All pride, self-glorying, arrangement of plans for the future, proceeds from the same unwillingness to be subject to the inner Ruler, the same unbelief that He is working in us to do the right thing and withstand the wrong.

The last passage in the Epistle, that which is included in our fifth chapter of it, has direct reference to a judgment which the Apostle believed was approaching. The hour was coming when the rich proud man would be called to account for the hire of the laborer which he had kept back by fraud, when the gold and silver would be found to be cankered, when the rust of them

would be a witness against the hoarders, and would eat their flesh as it were fire. To Mammon-worshipping Jews, whether they professed to believe in Jesus or to reject Him, the words were equally applicable. St. James was no respecter of persons. He cared not to exempt them or their heathen persecutors; he wished each to take the lesson home; and each too might strengthen himself with the words, "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." Had they acknowledged the coming of Christ in the flesh, surely they could not be content, unless it were shown to all that He was the King. Had they not acknowledged Him, were they still looking out for a great king and judge, let them look and wait; only let them ask themselves whether any but such a judge as this, any but One who had cared for men and suffered for men, could be the judge and deliverer they wanted, whether they could bear to look upon any other. The patience of Job, of the prophets, of all that had gone before, had surely been recorded for their encouragement and example. They might be patient as these were. They might check all natural restlessness, and wait for a coming deliverance as these had done. They would not be disappointed. The deliverance was coming. But if they were not waiting, if they were weary, discontented, hopeless.... Jews, Christians, why was that?

Such I think is the tenor of this Epistle, which some would persuade us was written to discourage faith and teach conformity to an outward law. It is, I apprehend, one of the most wonderful exhortations to trust in an inward spiritual teacher, law-giver, life-giver. It is the Sermon on the Mount, re-delivered after that Spirit had descended who could indeed make men perfect as their Father in heaven was perfect. If the writer of it had not acknowledged a Son of God and a Son of Man who had established His kingdom among men, his Epistle would consist of a number of incoherent sentences, utterly ineffectual for any moral use. That faith converts it into a living whole, into one of the most practical discourses, upon which that or any age could meditate.

ST. JUDE.

We know almost nothing of St. Jude. He described himself as the brother of James. That description occurring at the outset of a short Epistle, shows that he desired to acknowledge a relationship with him which was more than one of blood. He must, at all events, have been writing to men familiar with his name, to those who would regard it with a kind of reverence which they felt for that of no other Apostle, perhaps of no other man. Though the form of his superscription is a general one, though its warnings belong to all times, we have a right to assume that he meant them especially for the church at Jerusalem; we are bound to assume that they applied to acts and tendencies which he witnessed in his own day. A reader must have parted with all belief in the sincerity of the inspired writer—I should fear must have parted with his own—who can imagine that language so direct, personal, awful, was merely written in a study for the edification of future times, and was not meant to warn men of his own day, of an approaching judgment and an approaching apostasy. But if it be so, and we are not determined to strike this Epistle out of the canon (and what motive there could be for the later forgery of a document so distinctly referring to that time, it is not easy to understand), we must give up any notions about the purity of the primitive Church, which interfere with the belief that it was shaken to its very centre by the convulsions of the period preceding the fall of Jerusalem, that there was not merely a declension, but a positive apostasy in individuals and churches, that the judgment upon Jerusalem did not merely affect those who had denied the Gospel; but was even a more sifting day to those who had received it. All our Lord's words would have led us to expect that this must be so. If the plain language of the Epistle to the Hebrews means any thing, it must have been so. St. Jude's Epistle, coming from a quarter the most different from any whence that Epistle has ever been

supposed to come, supplies us with the most distinct confirmation of all its warnings.

ST. PETER. FIRST EPISTLE.

ANY person who considers the passages in the Acts of the Apostles which refer to St. Peter, will, I think, be of opinion that he was only for a short time settled in Jerusalem, though he may have returned to it often, especially on great occasions, like that of the debate respecting circumcision. We hear of him as tarrying in Joppa, going to Cæsarea, being found at Antioch. In his Epistle he addresses the strangers scattered abroad in Pontus, Cappadocia, Galatia, Asia and Bithynia, apparently as a person who has visited them and dwelt among them. If we connect these intimations with the popular tradition that he was at one time Bishop of Antioch, and at another of Rome, and with the great ecclesiastical theory which represents him as the universal Bishop, we may arrive at some more intelligible conception respecting him, than these contradictory reports, taken by themselves, will give us. Is it necessary to suppose that St. Peter ever occupied anywhere a position analogous to that of St. James at Jerusalem? May it not have been intended by the Divine Ruler of the Church, may not His intentions have been accomplished by a series of what would be called very natural accidents, that one of the Apostles of the circumcision should be the overseer of the first Christian society, should live in the city, should exhibit a pattern of righteousness in it, should write from it to the twelve tribes, should be sacrificed there; and that another Apostle, also primarily of the circumcison, though the opener of the Kingdom of Heaven to the Gentiles, should exercise a general oversight, never tying himself to any one locality, and if resident anywhere for a time, not assuming any specific jurisdiction? Those who are acquainted with the records of the first century, will recollect several difficulties respecting Antioch and Rome, which would be reconciled by this

hypothesis, and they will understand how easily the opposite one might gain ground from the determination to apply to an earlier time a fixed type which strictly belongs to a later one. But the main necessity for this or some similar view of St. Peter's office, arises, I conceive, from the consideration of his epistle.

At the conclusion of that epistle, our translators have introduced the words "The Church which is in Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you." Nearly all modern commentators have protested against this version as a quite monstrous paraphrase upon the original. But it is open, I believe, to an objection quite as grave as the etymological one. How could the Church at Babylon be elected together with those to whom St. Peter wrote? Who were they? The strangers dispersed through a number of countries in Asia. The Church in Philippi might by rather a bold and unusual form of speech be said to be elected together with the Church of Ephesus or Rome. Here the expression is without any force at all. The fact, I believe, is that the word *ecclesia* in St. Paul's sense of it, is not and could not be found in St. Peter's epistle. The Jewish nation was still to him the body called out of all lands. Gentiles might be joined to it, but it was the nucleus or heart of any divine society which would be formed in the world. And hence it has come to pass that St. Peter's Epistle has in all times been called a Catholic Epistle. That is to say, it is not limited to any particular city or neighborhood. It belongs to a body which, though far enough from universal, yet had in it the seed of universality, and in its dispersion throughout different lands was testifying of a society which should belong equally to all.

In these observations upon what may seem only the outward form of the Epistle, I believe I have indicated its most essential characteristics. Every one has perceived that it is in some respects most unlike the Epistle of St. James. De Wette and other German commentators exclaim with astonishment that its tone is almost Pauline. There I cannot agree with them. I believe that in its method and immediate design it is quite as distinct from the letters of one of these Apostles as of the

other. In its spirit and its ultimate object I believe it is equally in harmony with both.

The continual introduction of the name of Christ is the obvious difference between it and the epistle we last considered. It is by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ had begotten them. Their faith was to be tried with fire that it might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. The spirit of Christ in the prophets testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. They were to hope for the grace that should be brought unto them at the revelation of Jesus Christ. They were redeemed from their vain conversation with the precious blood of Christ.

It is obvious, I think, that Christ is here set before them expressly as an object of faith, as a centre to which they were to turn, and to which God was continually attracting them. Such an object was precisely what men scattered abroad and enduring a great fight of afflictions wanted. Jerusalem still existed. But could they feel about it as they once did? could they feel that it was indeed their capital, their home? The temple was still standing. But was it a real practical bond of cohesion and sympathy to wanderers and outcasts? St. Peter leads them away from the city and temple to Him who had given the city its real worth in the eyes of all who came up to it, to Him who had dwelt in the temple, and had met the true worshippers there. "To whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, they as lively stones were built up a spiritual house to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." This thought of a divine temple consisting of living men, and of a corner-stone by whom and in whom they could alone cohere, may be traced throughout the whole epistle. From first to last he seems to be telling them of a unity which existed for them, and which they might enjoy in spite of their dispersion, if only they would recognize the living ground of it, if only they would move round the true centre, and not try to exist as separate atoms apart from it.

Having this end steadily before him, St. Peter could not write to Jews simply as such, in the way that St. James was justified in writing and obliged to write. It was not their election that St. Peter chiefly desired to insist upon, though he was most anxious that they should remember it and understand it. It was the bond of their fellowship to one another. But that fellowship they could only realize when they confessed a living Christ to be implied in law, priesthood, and temple. The dispersed Jews, however they might desire to claim brotherhood with each other, however they might use the name of brother, would be severed in heart and mind as well as in place, until they confessed One who was above all place, who had ascended on high, as their common brother; until they loved Him and rejoiced in Him with joy unspeakable. But they could not do this unless they believed that He had actually suffered for them and with them; unless they acknowledged Jesus the sufferer to be the Christ.

St. Peter's Epistle then is in one sense more exclusive than that of St. James. It seems more distinctly to cut off the unbelieving Jew from the blessings of the new covenant. But it does so in no formal manner, by no harsh edict of excommunication. The Jew had a right to look upon himself as belonging to a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. Only he was to understand on what foundation his royalty, his priesthood, his election, stood. He was not to build it upon any thing fleshly or external, but on Him by whom they had been redeemed, by whose blood they had been sprinkled. Thus their union was represented as holy, spiritual, internal, grounded upon their relation to One whom they could only know by faith, who had come expressly to deliver them from outward sensual vanities, and to bring them to an inheritance eternal, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

And thus in another sense, this Epistle is more comprehensive than that of St. James. Though the Jew is always present to the mind of St. Peter, though all his language, all his thoughts, are derived from the Old Testament, though it is the Shepherd, the Corner-stone, the Priest of Israel, he is setting before them,

still there is nothing in his language which any baptized Gentile might not feel to be his own, and joyfully appropriate. If this living stone be the bond of a spiritual temple, it must be because all men are spiritual beings, and have a relation to Him; because apart from Him they do not know or realize their own spiritual condition. While therefore St. Peter uses the diffusion of the circumcised body over different heathen nations as the witness of a real divine federation, which circumstances cannot break up or persecutions annihilate, he at the same time shows how a body might continue to exist in all lands which had no mark of circumcision at all, which merely stood upon the Name of Him who had called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. At times we are almost tempted to feel that the Gentiles were specially present to the Apostle's mind, as where he says, "which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." Yet such language would not be felt as strange by Jews who had for years been cut off from all spiritual privileges, who had been regarded as strangers among Gentiles, without really having any sense of communion with each other. And if we hold, as I think we have every right to hold, that St. Peter had fallen in with many descendants of those Israelites who had never returned to Jerusalem in virtue of the decree of Cyrus, who, whether they had shared the first or the second captivity, had never known any thing of the restored city or the second temple, we may feel that their recognition as members of the commonwealth of Israel, as joint-heirs of a divine inheritance, as called by the divine Shepherd into his fold, must have been a Gospel indeed.

I need not point out to any one how carefully St. Peter constitutes all relationships of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, upon the basis of the common relation to Christ; how all the obligations of elders to their flocks, the duty of not being lords over God's heritage; how the duty to civil governors, all mutual services, obligations, courtesies, are placed on the same ground; how the whole framework of human society is shown to rest on Him who gave up Himself;

to rest upon self-sacrifice, and therefore on that complete and accepted sacrifice of which all others are to be the images, in the power of which all others are to be offered. But I would ask, whether the idea of filial obedience and filial sacrifice, of a Son who is come to make men sons of God, is not as much the subject of this epistle as of the last; whether their great and striking differences do not make this cardinal resemblance more conspicuous? And I would just suggest a question, which I may have to press upon some future occasion, whether of all Epistles in the Bible, St. Peter's is not the one which, as much by its direct statements as by its omissions, proves that Jesus Christ the Son of God, and not any man whatsoever, certainly not St. Peter himself, is the rock upon which the Catholic body must stand, and against which the gates of Hell shall not prevail?

ST. PETER. SECOND EPISTLE.

Allusions to St. Paul have been imagined in the Epistle of St. James; his name is formally introduced into the Second Epistle of St. Peter. It is obvious that there was an antecedent improbability of such a reference in the one case which does not exist in the other. St. James was writing to the twelve tribes, to people who, whether believers or unbelievers in Jesus, regarded the Apostle of the Gentiles with suspicion and dread, and were not in the least danger of misusing his authority or his statements to their own destruction. St. James, who at all events was thoroughly and profoundly practical, cannot be suspected by any one who reads his letter, of combating tendencies to which his disciples were not exposed; he aimed directly at the diseases which he had seen in them. St. Peter, who writes to those "that have obtained like precious faith with us,"—who, as is evident from the superscription of his first letter, had travelled over the very ground in which some of St. Paul's most flourishing Churches were established, who, though he regarded Christians not as connected with particular cities, but as members of

the commonwealth of Israel, yet had been the first to recognize Gentiles as entitled to enter that commonwealth, would inevitably come into contact with St. Paul's converts, or with those who had received impressions from him directly or at second hand, and might feel it necessary, as we shall find St. Paul himself did, to point out grave and perilous errors into which they had fallen.

It has never been doubted that Antinomianism is the tendency which is denounced throughout this Epistle. Now Antinomianism may be used vaguely to mean any doctrine which leads to the neglect of good works. In that sense St. James is of course fighting with it. But Antinomianism in its strict etymological meaning as the opposition to outward law, St. James is not combating; he is much rather warning his readers against the forgetfulness of that inner government which God is exercising over the heart and tongue, of the faith which is not in a living God, and therefore produces no living fruits. St. Peter is engaged with a different phase of feeling and thought; with the disposition to make the liberty of the Gospel an excuse for disobedience and rebellion. That this was a *possible* result of St. Paul's doctrine misunderstood and perverted, has never been denied. It might however result from influences of a very different kind; and many circumstances in the condition of the Jews in the provinces might give it with them especially a political direction. St. Peter does not use the name of his beloved brother for the purpose of insinuating that he had stirred up this feeling; he claims him as an assertor of the truth which he was asserting, that the long-suffering of God was not an excuse for recklessness, but a power leading to salvation and holiness; though he intimates that an opposite inference had been deduced from his writings by the unstable and ignorant.

The use in this Epistle of words almost the same with those which occur in the Epistle of St. Jude, as well as certain peculiarities in its composition,* and perhaps the reference to St.

* Among these may be mentioned the allusion to the Transfiguration. No doubt it is a characteristic of spurious epistles, to introduce broad and fre-

Paul, have created a suspicion of its genuineness, which is very widely diffused among German critics, especially in our day. I do not the least pretend to account for the similarity to St. Jude. And there are many passages in this Epistle which I feel that I do not understand. But I cannot think that if any book, not in the Bible, had been attributed for many generations to a certain author, these would be esteemed sufficient reasons by sober critics for denying it to him. I do not feel that any important issues are involved in the decision. If the evidence were strong I should of course acquiesce in it. I quite admit that the difficulties which have led students to resort to it, deserve careful examination. But, on the other hand, there are strong internal signs that it belongs to the first age, if not that it belongs to St. Peter, which I think certain prejudices in the minds of modern critics tempt them to overlook.

It is not, as I said when speaking of St. Jude, at all in accordance with our notions, that members of the primitive Church should be accused of crimes as great as those which brought destruction upon the world before the flood or upon the cities of the plain. We attach to the words "apostolic age," "first age," certain impressions of purity which no testimonies or arguments will induce us to lay aside, until we learn to adopt the uniform language of the Apostles, and believe that they are writing, not about the beginning of an age, but about the end of one. I

quent references to events which were familiar to the mind of the reader, so to make a violent claim upon his faith, which a simple and true writer has no need to make. No doubt the canonical epistles are remarkably free from allusions to the events of our Lord's life in the flesh; though a belief in these events must, upon any hypothesis, have been diffused among the converts. But I apprehend the occurrence of one such allusion in the writing of the only Apostle who could have introduced it (I am not now speaking of St. John, of whom I am to treat hereafter), is a very strange and unsatisfactory reason for discrediting a book in which it occurs. It would have been utterly out of place in the epistle of St. James, or in any of the epistles of St. Paul: I cannot feel that it is out of place in the letter of an Apostle, whose great object is to exhibit the glorified humanity of Christ to the minds of his disciples.

cannot express how much importance I feel is connected with the use of this scriptural nomenclature, or what mischiefs have arisen from the substitution of another of a directly opposite kind. It has been absolutely necessary, for instance, to take this Epistle of St. Peter as if it applied to a time immeasurably distant from his own, though every exhortation which he uses must seem to plain men utterly unsuitable, utterly deceptive, if it does not refer to the circumstances of the people for whom he was writing, to fears which their teacher entertained for them.

If the reader once adopts the conviction that St. Peter is writing about a distant future, I cannot be surprised that he finds the whole Epistle fragmentary and disjointed. He may then easily accept the hypothesis, that the first few paragraphs concerning Christian virtues and graces are St. Peter's, and that the rest of the document, proceeding from some other source, has been accidentally, and by mistake, attached to them. But if he can overcome his disinclination to believe that there was a fear among the Apostles that their converts should sink into the very worst moral state, that they should lose all hold upon truth and righteousness—and that there was a judgment coming upon the world of that day which would be more tremendous in its principles and its issues than the one which Noah had witnessed —I think he will discover a peculiar fitness in the opening of the Epistle to such a state of things. I do not hold that it is necessary, with our excellent Hammond, to trace Gnosticism at every turn in the apostolical writings, or to suppose that there were in the apostolical period the elaborated forms of Gnosticism which the next age brought forth. But that the Antinomian tendency of that time, as of all times, arose from the attempt to separate knowledge from obedience, to set up the apprehension of truths against the submission to commands, I am bound to suppose. And I cannot conceive any more apostolical method of treating such a tendency than that which St. Peter has resorted to. "You boast of your illumination, your knowledge of the divine and the invisible. But that knowledge is first of all the acknowledgment, the ἐπίγνωσις, and inward discernment of

a righteous person, of one who is the deliverer from sin." The γνῶσις was taken to be something in itself; it stood in no direct relation to faith; in still less direct relation to moral energy or virtue and to self-restraint. But faith St. Peter says will not subsist if virtue do not sustain it; virtue demands knowledge; knowledge requires self-government, self-government patience, patience brotherly affection, brotherly affection love in its highest sense. Each grace he speaks of is not to be "added on" to the last, as our translators perversely teach, but to be brought as a fresh supply of fuel to prevent the fire, already kindled, from going out. The etymology of ἐπιχορηγήσατε, no less than the use of it elsewhere, even if it were not joined to σπουδὴν πᾶσαν παρεισενέγκαντες, will surely decide this to be the sense of the Apostle.

And this sense goes through the Epistle. They were called to glory and virtue. Let them see that they made their calling and election sure; that they actually inherited and possessed that which was made theirs. So that supply of grace which was always ready for them would be effectual for its purpose, so that entrance into the eternal kingdom of the Lord and Saviour, which He promised them, would be a real, not a nominal one, an entrance into a kingdom of Righteousness, Peace, Joy.

To this effort the Apostle would stir them as long as he dwelt in this tent or tabernacle. It was not to be a fixed tabernacle, like that which he had proposed to build on the Mount for Moses, Elias, and Jesus, not knowing what he said. The voice which had dispersed that dream, "This is my beloved Son," was still in his ears; still assuring him of a more fixed and eternal habitation, warning him that the stakes of the visible tent would soon be taken down. That voice was as real now as it had been then; the glory which shone about them at that moment was a permanent one. They had not been indulging, as many thought, in elaborate myths, well concocted legends, when they had spoken of His power and presence. They had been permitted to witness a momentary manifestation of it, that they might call upon their disciples to believe in it and to enter into it. That vision

enabled them to grasp more firmly the prophetic word, which spoke of this power and presence. To that word those whom St. Peter was addressing were applying themselves, perhaps with some fear and restlessness, each of them seeking some partial and private solution of its riddles. Their study was not over-zealous; they did well to work in that mine. But let them remember that the day of the Lord which the prophets spoke of was to arise and shine fully in their HEARTS. Let them remember that holy men spoke under the power of the Holy Spirit, and therefore did not speak out their own narrow thoughts and speculations, but truths concerning the nature of God and the well being of the Universe.

And if they were busy with true prophets, let them not forget what *they* so continually spoke of, the existence of false prophets side by side with them. Such had been in all times, such would be among themselves.

What follows is a very clear description of the tendency and character of these false teachers. The confusion of fleshly independence with spiritual freedom, of the freedom to sin with the freedom from sin, would be their main characteristic. They would deny the Lord that brought them; that is to say, they would deny that they had been redeemed; that He was their Redeemer. Redemption in their minds would bear an altogether different force from the true one; hence, indulgence was what they would be craving for. In such men the possession of spiritual powers would lead their fellows and themselves into deeper sensuality; the sin of Balaam would be repeated in them; for in him the very idea of the false prophet, as the scripture sets it forth, was realized. He was essentially the false man, trafficing with his conscience, using the divine wisdom and the divine power to serve his gain or his lust. The recollection of Simon was probably present to St. Peter's mind. If we may at all trust the later traditions respecting him, he would exactly embody this notion of the Christian Balaam. If we may look upon him, as all antiquity encourages us to do, as the head and type of a class, the false prophets in the apostolic age may have been as

numerous as they ever can have been in the times of Elijah or Jeremiah. These St. Peter regards as at once produced by, and producing the Antinomian temper which was prevailing in the Church; themselves the signs of a nearer apostasy, and hurrying forward the judgment which was at hand.

Of that judgment the Apostle proceeds to speak in the third chapter. His words, if they stood alone, and we knew nothing of what had been said by other apostles and evangelists, would certainly lead us to suppose that the last days were approaching, and that the scoffers who asked where was the promise of His coming, would be as much men of that day as the false prophets he had just been speaking of. The Apostles had told them that His coming was drawing near; the mockers would say, "Where are the signs of it? Where is the promise of it? Is not the whole course and order of things just what it has always been? Since the first fathers of the old world fell asleep, has there been the least derangement in the world's monotony?" The answer is precisely what we should have expected from the previous passages. There is a reference to the time of Noah as a parallel to that which is approaching; there was to be as great a shock and convulsion in the order of the world then, as there had been at the time of the Deluge.

So much of the Apostle's meaning seems to me clear; there are parts of it upon which I wait for light. I do not suppose any one is satisfied with our translation of the passage respecting the dissolution of the elements; that τεθησαυρισμένοι πυρὶ can mean "reserved *unto* fire;" or that τούτων οὖν πάντων λυομένων (treasured up to fire) (all these then being dissolved), can be equivalent with, "Seeing that all these things *shall be* dissolved;" or that δι' ἣν has the force of, "in which;" not, "for the sake of which," or "in consequence of which."* The

* Lachmann has adopted τακήσεται (shall be melted, consumed, wasted away), in the place of τήκεται (is consumed, etc.), the ordinary reading, and has so far done something to sustain our translation of the 12th verse. If his reading καὶ τὰ ἐπαγγέλματα (and the promises) is received, it must give a different character to the 13th verse; though I confess I do not see what will be its precise force in that event.

argument surely suffers from some of these deviations. What effect it would have upon men surrounded by motives to sensuality and Antinomianism to hear that at some very distant time the existing framework of things would be dissolved, I cannot understand. If they were then in process of dissolution, if the eternal day was emerging out of the mists and shadows of night, there was good reason for fixing their minds upon that in which they might abide for ever, for withdrawing them from that which was transitory by its very nature and quality. This meaning must, I think, be in the words, whatever be the correct version of them, about which I should be thankful if scholars would give a careful and deliberate judgment. This at all events I must claim, that the words, "one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day," shall be meditated upon in silence and awe, not turned into an excuse for making Scripture as vague and flexible as interpreters may find convenient. I can conceive no more beautiful and helpful passage than this is, if we use it to bring before our minds that day of the Lord which cannot be measured by the rules and conditions of time, which lies out of them and beyond them, and yet which is at certain crises presented in its full brightness and glory to eyes that are waiting for it, and prepared to welcome it; any which more entirely harmonizes with what is said of the day of the Lord by the old prophets, and by the other Apostles; any which can better prepare us for understanding the use of the same word by the brother to whom St. Peter alludes as having uttered some things hard to be understood. But I am sure that if we merely use the thousand years as a pretext for postponing indefinitely the judgment which the Christians of the first century were taught to expect in their own time, we shall make the Apostle of the Gentiles even more unintelligible than the Apostle of the circumcision.

On the whole then, I think we may affirm that the two Epistles of St. Peter are emphatically Epistles concerning the Son of God, and the Son of Man; Epistles which most remarkably bring Christ personally before us in these Churches as the living

bond of a society ; as the object of Faith ; as the deliverer from present evil ; as the refuge in a rapidly approaching judgment, which would try men of every class of what sort they were. Just the characteristics which presented themselves to us in St. Mark's Gospel are also here. Christ is not showing men of a Father, but the Father is leading them to Christ. He is the actual centre which they need in their dispersion to make them a people ; He is the righteous Lord whom each of them needs to keep him from falling back into the abyss of corruption out of which he has been rescued.

ST. PAUL.

I PROPOSE to take St. Paul's Epistles in the order in which I find them in the Canon. But there is one passage which is so important for its own sake, so important as connecting the narrative in St. Luke with the internal life of the Apostle, so specially important because it occurs in that Epistle which brings out the opposition between St. Peter and St. Paul at Antioch—the one which modern Paulines therefore delight to dwell upon above all others—that I must make it an introduction to all my subsequent remarks.

It is this (Gal. i. 15, 16) : "But when it pleased God, who had chosen me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." This is, in the strictest sense, St. Paul's account of his own conversion. It will not be supposed that he made light of the vision which he saw on the way to Damascus ; he records that vision again and again with its different details ; he presumes the Galatians to be acquainted with it ; no fact less signal could bridge over the chasm between the time past in which he persecuted the Church of God and wasted it, and that in which he preached the faith he once destroyed. But we are not satisfied with the outward fact ; we want to know what it signifies, what

processes within corresponded to it, what discovery was actually made to the mind of the Apostle which a light in the outward heaven could not make. Here he tells us; "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me;" He discovered to me that there was One against whose admonitions and invitations I had been kicking, One who was my Lord, and yet whom I had been persecuting. This revelation it was which first confounded and blinded me, then illuminated all the dark passages of my previous life. From this Son of God had proceeded every right desire and true thought that had ever been in me; from myself resisting and disowning Him, all that had been evil and false. But was this Son of God only in *me?* Was He revealed to me only that I might know my own blessing and my own evil? Was He revealed to me because I was different from the rest of my Jewish brethren? Was He revealed to me only because I was one of them? No; but He was revealed in me for this end, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles. I was made to understand that which was true of me as a man; so I was fitted to be a missionary to men. Hence too I was enabled to fulfil the office and calling of a Jew; I was chosen from my mother's womb to assist in carrying out the covenant to Abraham: "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed!" Therefore I could not confer with flesh and blood; I could not for the present avail myself of outward instruction; I went into Arabia to be taught thoroughly in silence and retirement the meaning of this wonderful communication; how it must affect myself and the world; to wait for the answer to my question: "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?"

I conceive then that we have the highest warrant for believing that St. Paul's special work was to carry this message to the nations, to tell men that the Son of God was IN them, that He was the real head and root of their humanity, that apart from Him they had no life, or righteousness, or unity at all; to bring out this fact in relation to the experiences of their own minds, to the facts of history, to the calling of the chosen people, to their law, to the order of Society, to the past, present, future condition of

the world. He was to show how our Lord's Incarnation, His death, resurrection, ascension, bore upon and explained His relation to human beings, expounded the riddle of their own existence, confuted the innumerable evidences which outward and inward facts seemed to oppose to a belief in His actual fellowship with them and dominion over them.

Such, I say, would be the rough notion one would form of the object of St. Paul's life from this memorable passage. By assuming it as the basis of our inquiry we may perhaps be able to trace the distinct objects of his different epistles more clearly, without departing from the most admitted maxims respecting them, provided those maxims are not directly inconsistent with the statements of the Apostle himself.

I.

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

Thus, for instance, we shall not be obliged to doubt that the Epistle to the Romans treats on the doctrine of justification by faith, as all Protestant writers would eagerly affirm. Still less shall we be disposed to deny that it treats very accurately and fully on the subject of Law and the relation of the Law to the Gospel. We shall not pass over those passages in the Epistle which assert the rights of the Gentiles, or those which speak of Israel after the flesh, or of Israel according to promise. We shall neither wish to regard the letter less as explaining the personal life and conflicts of St. Paul, than a reader of the 7th chapter would conclude that it did, nor less, as explaining the condition of the human race considered in its two heads, than would be inferred from the 5th chapter. Whatever aspect the Epistle has presented to any earnest and devout student of it, even to any, the most superficial, reader of it, ought to receive, and I be-

lieve would receive, the fullest recognition from one who understood that Christ had been revealed in the Apostle, in order that he might preach Him. But the different doctrinal and practical statements which are addressed to this Church when seen in the light of that truth, have no longer a fragmentary character; they are no longer a collection of opinions, or counsels, or arguments on different subjects, strung accidentally together; nor, again, do they constitute a mere logical formal treatise, in which expressions of sympathy and affection are inappropriate, or, at least, with which they have no natural connection. The whole will form a *Letter*, in which the sequence of thoughts is clear and orderly, in which no part could be omitted without injuring the sense of the other part, in which all flows forth freely from a rich, full, inspired mind, and is in the most perfect adaptation to the wants and circumstances of the particular persons to whom it is addressed.

Those who make Justification by faith the one subject of the Epistle to the Romans, can produce some evidence in favor of their hypothesis from every chapter. But the chapters, from the 3d to the end of the 9th, are the great supports of their argument. They are very much disposed to consider the first two chapters as prologue, those after the 9th, or, at all events, after the 11th, as epilogue. By this arrangement they are able, they think, to trace the argument in those which form the substance of the letter with much clearness. In the 3d it is shown how all are guilty before God; in the 4th, that Abraham and David found forgiveness of their sins, and had a righteousness imputed to them in virtue of their faith, under the old dispensation; in the 5th, how this forgiveness and imputation become available for us through the obedience of Jesus Christ; in the 6th, that the doctrine of faith without works is clear from any evil moral consequences; in the 7th, how it delivers the conscience from a terrible bondage and anguish; in the 8th, how it is connected with all anticipations and hopes of future deliverance and glory; in the 9th, how it is grounded on a divine election, not after the flesh, but the spirit.

We have here what seems a very plausible view of this part of the Epistle; but when it is examined from different points of view it gives rise to many controversies. Does St. Paul, it is asked, actually mean to say that all men whatsoever are sinners in the same sense? that the words, "there is none righteous, no, not one: their mouth is an open sepulchre; they have the tongues of asps; there is no fear of God before their eyes;" apply to Samuel, Hezekiah, Isaiah? But, if not, where do you stop? There is no limitation of the language; there are no phrases to intimate that the description applies to the unfaithful and not to the faithful; nay, the whole argument would be destroyed by such a supposition.

What faith, it is asked again, is this which wrought such blessings for David and Abraham? What was the kind and the degree of it? Did it point to some event not yet accomplished? Was it in the future or the present? If it was in the future, how does it resemble the faith by which people are said to be justified after the coming of Christ? If it was in something actual and present, what was there which was present to them and is present to their successors?

It is further asked whether the idea of imputation of righteousness does not interfere with the express and solemn assertion of the Apostle, that the judgments of God are according to truth, and with his denunciation of the Jews for thinking that righteousness can be a mere formal thing? Another question takes this form: Would it not seem from the 5th chapter, that the justification by Christ was correspondent to the fall in Adam, nay, that it was in some respects more complete than that? And how can this be, if the justification is only for those who believe in it, and they are so few? Then arises a moral difficulty. "No doubt St. Paul says that we are not to continue in sin that grace may abound; but supposing that a man is not tempted to sin by the possession of grace, is he not forced to sin by the absence of it, and is not one consequence as terrible as the other?" Again; "If the faith of a man does not attract the grace, which would be a Romish doctrine, in what sense can

faith be said to be really the justifying power or principle?" Once more; "To whom (I need scarcely say how often this question is repeated) does the description in the 7th chapter apply? To St. Paul unconverted or converted? To a man conscious of an evil nature, without being conscious of a deliverer, or to a man conscious of both and believing the latter to be the stronger? To whom do all the assurances of the 8th chapter apply? Is it not to those, whom according to the doctrine of the 9th, God is willing to save? Are there not others, vessels of wrath, whom, according to the same chapter, He is willing to destroy?"

It seems to me that all these difficulties may be traced to one source. It is assumed that St. Paul's theology starts from the idea of human depravity, that he looks upon Christ and all the acts of Christ (I am afraid of using profane language, but I know not how to avoid it), as mere provisions against sin. It cannot be doubted that this notion proceeds in a great measure from an impression that St. Paul's conversion is the key to his life and his doctrine. It will not be supposed that I can have any quarrel with that opinion; I earnestly maintain the soundness of it. But I must interpret his conversion as he interprets it; then I shall have no motive to disturb the natural order of his Epistle, or to represent the opening of it, wherein *he* seems to announce the innermost purpose of the whole as a mere porch or vestibule.

CHAPTER I.

St. Paul begins his letter with saying that he is entrusted with a gospel of God concerning His Son Jesus Christ, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection of His dead limbs or members. He says that he is not ashamed of this Gospel of God; because it is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth. If he is asked how or why it is the power of God unto salvation, he makes answer, because in it the Righteousness of God is revealed unto faith, according as it is written

in Habbakuk, the righteous man shall live by faith. As this Gospel is the revelation of the righteousness of God to every one that believeth, so also he says, it is the revelation of the wrath of God to those who hold down the truth in injustice or wrong. He explains what he means by this singular phrase. God, he says, has manifested Himself to men, not to one man here or there, but to all. His power and Godhead are seen through His works. That which is capable of being known of God He has declared to them.

St. Paul leaves us in no doubt what kind of manifestation this is. It is a manifestation of *righteousness*—of God as a *righteous* Being. He goes on to trace up the unrighteousness of men in all its different forms to their not liking or thinking it good, to retain God in their knowledge. In a number of ways they confess His righteousness ; they confess that He is passing judgment upon evil. And yet they do homage to the creature more than to the Creator ; they make Him in the likeness of birds and beasts and creeping things. And this idolatry, this revolt from the invisible God, brings after it a continually increasing train of moral corruptions and evils.

CHAPTER II.

So far his countrymen might be ready to agree with him. They could condemn the idolatrous world, and boast of their own privileges. But how dare they do this ? Had they the least right to say that the mere possession of a law and a covenant had exempted the members of their nation from the sins of other nations ? Had not Jews been guilty of every crime which could be imputed to heathens ? Had it not been even said that the Name of God was blasphemed through them among the heathen ? How stood the case then ? God had revealed Himself to the Gentile, God had revealed Himself in a more perfect manner to the Jew. And Jews or Gentiles, who, by patient continuance in well-doing, sought for glory and honor and eternal life—that is

to say, as all the previous passage shows—Jews or Gentiles who really availed themselves of God's revelation of Himself, and chose to retain Him in their knowledge, would obtain that which they sought; while Jews and Gentiles who were contentious, and obeyed not the truth, but obeyed unrighteousness, would find tribulation and wrath. How could such an evil come upon a member of the favored chosen nation? Because the whole covenant is with the Jew inwardly; because circumcision is not that which is outward in the flesh, but means the separation of the inner man to God, the cutting him off from that which is fleshly and outward.

CHAPTER III.

Accordingly he goes on in the 3d chapter to ask what gain has the Jew, or what profit is there in circumcision? And he answers, "Much every way. Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God." God had revealed to them His own righteousness and His own relation to them. And what though some did not believe, should their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect? No, let Him be true, though every man was a liar. But this did not prove that the Jew, as Jew, was better than the Gentile as Gentile. Simply in themselves, apart from God, it showed them to be all alike under sin.

Now I submit, that if we follow the Apostle in these statements, the character of the rest of the Epistle will be determined by them.

The passage in the 3d chapter, which is quoted from the Psalm, need not be strained from the signification which it evidently had in the mind of the original writer as the condemnation of a particularly godless age. Taken in that sense, it will quite accomplish the purpose for which the Apostle introduces it. Those things which the Law saith it saith to them who are under the Law. How could such an indictment as this be preferred against men who had the privilege of being Jews, if that which was peculiar to them as Jews, itself constituted them

righteous? That, he goes on to show, can never be the effect of Law. By Law comes the knowledge of sin. It makes a man aware of that in him which is at war with a standard wherewith he confesses that he ought to be in conformity. Such a statement of the effect and object of Law evidently presumes something antecedent to it. The Law does not discover evil in a man, except as it discovers God to him, and God as related to himself. It proclaims to him the dreadful fact of an inclination to be separated from One intimately and closely connected with him, from One whom he cannot cast off. And St. Paul insists, with the strictest consistency, that He of whom the Law thus testifies, is a righteous Being, that the sense of sin would mean nothing if He were not. The notion that the Law reveals to a man a Being of infinite power who has made a decree against him for which he will exact the utmost penalty, does not enter into St. Paul's mind, is not hinted at in a single sentence. What he says is, that a Being who is all right and true, makes the man know that there is that in him which is adverse to Right and Truth,—awakens in him the sense, not of punishment, but of sin. Hence the conclusion is evident: whether this sense has been awakened by positive law or by any other method, the result is the same. Jew and Gentile stand alike guilty before God; the condemnation belongs, not to the circumstances in which they differ, but to that in which they are alike. The *world* is guilty before God.

And now comes in the Justification. The sin has consisted in the man not liking to retain the invisible and righteous God in his knowledge; God has made him conscious of that sin; the deliverance from it, the restoration of man to a right state, must be the justification. How is it effected? St. Paul declares that God has manifested the Righteousness of which the law testified, but which the law could not produce, in the Person of Jesus Christ. He says that His Righteousness is manifested *in* the forgiveness of sins. He says that this revelation is made to Faith. It is not the eye which recognizes the righteousness of God in Christ. It is not the outward man which asks to be for-

given. It is that within which is conscious of estrangement, which longs for reconciliation. To that God addresses himself, to that He reveals the reconciliation and His righteousness in the reconciliation. The man believes, becomes reconciled, becomes righteous. But he has no plea for boasting, he has not made himself righteous, he has not obtained any righteousness of his own. He has believed in God's righteousness, he has believed in that righteousness, as seeking to make him righteous. God is just and the justifier. All the man's justice, all his justification arises from his acknowledgment of God. But if there is not a different God for Jews and Gentiles, the Gentile has as much right to believe in Him, is as much bound to believe in Him, as the Jew. The revelation in Christ must be the justification of both or of neither.

CHAPTER IV.

But the thought naturally occurs, did Abraham's Circumcision do him no good? or was not Abraham in himself different from another man? Hear the Scripture. God reveals Himself to the uncircumcised Abraham; he believes; his faith is counted to him for righteousness. He becomes an actual inheritor and enjoyer of that which is not his own, of that which is in another. His circumcision is a seal of this righteousness which he had being yet uncircumcised. His descendants had as much right to believe in the righteous God as he had. Here was a perpetual sign and witness of their right. But the nature of the sign showed that it *was* a right to *believe*, a *spiritual* privilege which the descendant of Abraham possessed, not a right to think that he had something of his own which he took by descent, a *fleshly* privilege.

Abraham acquired a *righteousness* which was not in himself, by believing in a Righteous God. He acquired a *power* which was not in himself by believing in God's power and God's promise. And so he became the father of many nations; the father

of the Faithful, circumcised or uncircumcised, all having a right to believe in One who has revealed Himself as their Justifier. But how has God revealed Himself as the Justifier of Gentiles and Jews? By raising Jesus Christ from the dead. By delivering One out of that which was the universal witness and curse of the universal sin. By announcing Himself as the deliverer of *man* from death and sin.

CHAPTER V.

Do you ask how the deliverance of Jesus Christ from death was the deliverance of Man from death and the assurance that sin was vanquished for him? *I* could only answer by saying, "Christ was revealed in St. Paul that he might preach Him among the Gentiles." St. Paul found that Christ was the righteous ground of his own being, that he might proclaim Him as the righteous ground of Humanity. But if you wish for a further answer to the question, St. Paul himself will give it.

The memorable 5th chapter of the Epistle begins first with declaring that having been justified, not by any thing that we have done, not by any thing in ourselves, not by any thing that separates us from our brethren, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, that we have access to a grace in which we can stand, that we can rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, that we can welcome tribulations as means of cultivating patience, experience, hope; that the supporter of hope, that which makes it not ashamed, is the love of God shed abroad in the heart. For that love of God has been manifested in Christ dying not for the good or the just, but for the ungodly. Its strength in the past affords the most certain pledge of its strength for the future. If we have been justified by His death, we shall be saved by His life. Such statements might be used,—they have often been used,—as a plea for the believer, or the man who thinks he is a believer, to exalt himself above other men, to say, "I have this peace, this hope, this experience, this love, to

which you are a stranger." St. Paul goes on to cut away the ground of this boasting, and at the same time to show what a ground there is of confidence and hope for those who will believe in God and not in their own belief. "As by the offence of one, he says, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification." The translation is careless; there are unnecessary and inconvenient interpolations in it; but it preserves the assertion of the great fact, that the justification is coextensive with the condemnation; that if all shared in one, all share in the other. The translators trembled at their own admission. In the next sentence they evaded it by a sad tampering with the sense of the original; a tampering of which Luther also cannot be acquitted. "For as by one man's disobedience *the* many were constituted sinners, so, by the obedience of one, *the* many shall be constituted righteous." If only a certain portion of the human race had partaken of the sin of Adam, only a certain portion had partaken of the justification of Christ. But St. Paul affirms *all* to have been involved in one, *all* to be included in the other. All the members of the race of which Adam was the head were proved by Adam's sin to have an inclination to separate themselves from God, and to have in themselves no righteousness at all; all the members of the race of which Christ is the head, are proved and declared to have a righteousness in Him, a righteousness which is not their own, a righteousness which they possess only by faith. If we adhere to the letter of the Epistle there is no going back from this statement; we may explain it away as we like; but there it is, set forth in plain unenigmatical words. I should feel as much difficulty as any one has felt in believing these words—I should see the absolute necessity of explaining them away by fair means or foul,—if I looked upon Christ's death and resurrection as merely events taking place at a certain late period in the world's history, designed to remedy certain evils which had occurred in an earlier period of it. But since I look upon them as revelations of the Son of God in whom all things had stood from the first, in whom

God had looked upon His creature Man from the first, I do not want to get-rid of them, I give thanks for them as the most wonderful and blessed exposition of God's order in the universe, of man's disorder and transgression, of the method by which one has been used for the removal and cure of the other.

CHAPTER VI.

Part of St. Paul's statement might seem to imply that the grace of Christ was *only* co-extensive with the fall in Adam. He is careful to guard against this inference. "Not as the offence," he says, "so is also the free gift." It was not one act of obedience matched against one act of disobedience; but against all the accumulated disobediences of human creatures from the creation day. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Such a view of forgiveness, profound, expanding, infinite, surmounting all offences, going beneath all, of course seems at first a warrant for presumptuous sin. And surely if justification meant the removal of punishment—the deliverance of a man from the fear of the consequences of his transgression,—this is a very plausible, perhaps a very reasonable conclusion. The Apostle's answer to it introduces us to that which is at once the most practical and the most deeply metaphysical part of his letter. "What! live in sin," he says, "because we are delivered from sin? Live in that to which it is our one great privilege to be dead? For do you not know that as many of us as have been baptized into Jesus Christ, have been baptized into His death? So then we have been buried with him through baptism unto death, that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life." What can be so practical, so entirely accordant with the experience of every human being in every latitude, in every religion, as that there are two powers struggling for him, one dragging him down into himself and below himself, one raising him out of himself and above himself? This conviction is the key to all Mytholo-

gies, to all Philosophies, that which binds them to the conscience of the individual man, that which makes them in some imperfect degree commentaries on the world's history. Wherein lay the difference between St. Paul's language to his converts at Rome, and that which Pythagoras or Socrates would have addressed to any earnest disciple? It lay in this. "We know," he says, "that the good power who is raising us up, has claimed us as his own. Our baptism is a witness, not that we have chosen the good and eschewed the evil, not that we are following truth and flying from falsehood, but that He who is good and true has chosen us, that he has taken us into his service." This is the main idea of the chapter, that those who were servants of sin were taken to be servants of God, that their right to this name had been asserted and established, that their highest blessing and privilege was to yield up their members as instruments of righteousness. But the contrast of death and life which the Apostle introduces, gives a new expansion to this idea. "Ye are dead," he says, "to sin: count yourselves dead. Ye are alive to God; count yourselves alive." Here are both the facts of humanity which he has been expounding in connection with the history of the race in the last chapter, brought in to expound the history of the individual. It is not only that there is an Adam head of the race, and a Christ head; there is a Christ head, and an Adam head of thee. But the Christ has triumphed over the Adam, the Son of God in your nature has been victorious over your nature; it has been slain in Him, it has been raised to a new life in Him. And now God claims each one of you as His. Each one of you is claimed as a sharer of the death of Christ, as a sharer of His life. Act as if you were a child of Adam, as if the Adam in you was your master,—then you are a sinner, and you have the wages of sin which is death. Act as if the Adam was dead, and you were a new man married to Jesus Christ,—then you acquire His righteousness, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end that eternal life which consists in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER VII.

Christ and sin have been spoken of as two powers to either of which a man may yield obedience. Claiming Christ, being married to Him, the man dies to sin, and dying to sin, he dies to the law which condemns sin; it no longer condemns him, it condemns a state which he disclaims. He is married to another, to Him that is risen from the dead, that He may bring forth fruits to God.

Then comes that wonderful history, about which commentators have fought so much; in which suffering people find an explanation of themselves, which they feel must be in some sense the history of a past experience—one out of which the Apostle emerged when the full light broke upon his soul—in another sense the discovery of that which was true of him at all times as it is true of all men in all times. The key to the whole passage is, I believe, in these words: "I was alive without the Law once; but the commandment having come, sin came into life, and I died." This then is the death which sin causes, the instant death: "*I* died; I was shut up in self. I could not get beyond myself; therefore as a spirit I was dead. I strove to escape out of this prison. I yearned after a higher state. I felt that I belonged to it; I delighted in the law of God: I could not obey it. Oh, wretched man! How can I be delivered from this death? If I am still the same, what new circumstances can make any difference to me? If *I* am evil, what forgiveness can make any difference to me? But thou art not evil; thou art righteous; Christ is in thee; thou art one with Him. I thank my God through Jesus Christ my Lord." This is surely the history of a discovery made to the Apostle at a certain time. A truth was revealed to him which was good for all his after years. He had no need to repeat the same terrible process again; God claimed him as a new creature in Christ. He was so then; He would be so always. But that revelation brought with it another.

"With my flesh I serve the law of sin." That is not altered by my conversion or my baptism; my conversion and baptism both declare it. In you, your flesh, your separate self, they both alike say, there dwelleth no good thing. Only while you assert the privilege of a spiritual creature, the privilege of not being shut up in self, of being married to a living Lord, only then art thou righteous, only then art thou alive.

CHAPTER VIII.

The 8th chapter most consistently carries out this idea. "There is therefore no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath freed me from the law of sin and death." These words, and all the magnificent passage that follows them, develope more fully the truth which has been gradually working itself out through all the previous part of the epistle, that man in the flesh, in himself, is condemned, hopelessly condemned, that his state is a state of alienation from God, a death which must go on by an unchangeable eternal law; that man in the spirit, in Christ Jesus, is justified, redeemed, renewed, under a law of resurrection, with all possibilities of expanding vision and ever-increasing glory. What is added to that great revelation in this chapter is, that the spirit united to Christ raises up the body to be its minister, to partake its risen freedom, even as the body has drawn down the spirit to partake of its subjection to all visible things. Nor does the regenerating law and principle stop here. The Apostle sees the whole involuntary creation subjected to man's bondage; therefore, assured of a share in his emancipation. So little does he tolerate the notion that the fallen condition of any creature can ever, by any possibility, become its true condition, so deeply does the thought penetrate his mind and his theology, that humanity can only be contemplated in Christ, that the law of the spirit of life in Him is the law of the universe. All the passages at the conclusion of the chapter respecting those whom God foreknew,

predestinated, justified, called, glorified ; passages, which, so far from wishing to pass over or evade, I would most earnestly press upon the attention of every reader, and entreat him to seek more and more earnestly for the fullest signification of them ; all these must be interpreted by the Apostle's previous language. If we forget what he has said about the spirit and the flesh, if we fail to see that there is a flesh and a spirit in every man, if we do not confess that the spiritual man is *the* man, the one who is walking according to God's will and the constitution which He has estab lished for human beings, all those words lose their force ; we may seem to take them literally ; we shall find by degrees that we are obliged to twist the letter as much as we pervert the spirit of the texts in which they occur. When, therefore, the Apostle concludes with that song of rapture : "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" I apprehend those will hear it most faintly, and will join least in it, who are trying to make out for themselves the right to be God's elect to the exclusion of others; and that those hearts will echo most clearly with it, which thank God that He has been pleased of His mere mercy and love to call them out of the pride and exclusiveness that are natural to them, to enter into those common blessings and privileges which he has bestowed upon their kind in Him who died and rose again for it, and to have a glimpse of that infinite love which is above all, and over all, and through all, and beneath all.

CHAPTER IX.

The 9th chapter opens with an expression of the infinite sorrow which St. Paul had felt when he thought of his nation as cast away by God. He felt the anguish of an Israelite, but he felt more than that. The permanence of this nation is bound up with this belief in the promises of God. If it ceases then the Word of God hath failed ; He who is, and was, and is to come, has changed His mind and purpose. But this, says St. Paul, is impossible ; Israel cannot cease. And is it a new thing to dis-

tinguish Israelites from Israel? Is not the whole history full of cases of men who seemed to be the natural heirs of the promises being rejected, while yet the promise and the race continue? What is the meaning of such cases? They are explained by that great law which has been developed already—the law of the spirit and the flesh. Israelites fancy that they are such in virtue of their descent from Abraham or Isaac. What! were not Ishmael and Esau firstborn of Abraham and Isaac? What did their rejection indicate? Not any special wrong-doing on their part. Their exclusion was decided before they had done good or bad. Why? To signify that the race stood on a higher ground than that of fleshly relationship, that it was the witness of a spiritual relationship;—of God's calling, not of man's generation,—of sonship to Him, not of sonship to Abraham.

This is the idea which the reader will find going through the whole chapter. Popular writers, as well as learned commentators, have strangely inverted it. Instead of making the permanence consist in the preservation of *Israel*, they have construed St. Paul's words as if he said, Israel may perish, but a few select Israelites, of whom I am one, will be saved; a kind of consolation which, instead of making his anguish of heart less, would have utterly overwhelmed him; for then the Word of God had failed, the distinct promises and assurances of the prophets had not been fulfilled. Secondly, in strict conformity with this first misinterpretation, they have supposed that the exclusion of Ishmael and of Esau when they had done neither good nor evil, is an assertion of God's arbitrariness or self-will, or, as they phrase it, sovereignty. If it had been so, all that conceit of the Jews of their own privileges and superiority to other people with which St. Paul was fighting, would have been confirmed by the very instances he was employing as arguments against it. Whereas, if he says to the Jew, "You cannot pretend that Jacob was chosen because he was better than Esau, or Isaac, because he was better than Ishmael; but it was done to fulfil a purpose of the divine mind, and that purpose the very one which I have been setting forth in all this letter, to put contempt upon mere

fleshly descent which is partial and limited, and to assert that spiritual bond which exists between God and man in Christ, the Lord of man's spirit, the Son of God and the Son of Man;" he maintains the great object for which he lived, and deduces his right to be an apostle to the Gentiles from the history of the Jews.

Starting from these false premises, it has been natural enough that interpreters should have seen in all the rest of the chapter a mere assertion of naked sovereignty displayed in choosing one set of men and rejecting another. And no doubt, if this particular passage has no connection with all the rest of the letter in which it occurs; if it has not been the business of that letter to set forth God emphatically as the righteous Being who is making men righteous; if there has been nothing said before about the justification of all by the obedience of One, as all had been condemned by the disobedience of one; if there has been no attempt to reconcile these different assertions by the experience of the Apostle that there was in himself, because he was a man, though he was also a circumcised and elect Jew, a flesh in which there was no good thing, and a spirit which hungered after righteousness; if there has been no testimony that God in Christ receives and adopts this spirit, and baptizes, quickens, raises it by His own Spirit, and promises to raise the body too in due time out of its thraldom to that flesh which He has condemned; if we are to start with the words, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," without the least knowledge what manner of being speaks the words, and respecting what manner of being they are spoken; if we are at liberty to deduce our knowledge of these points from some heathen conception of an Ammon or a Jove; most assuredly these words must convey that impression to the minds of readers which has been received from them. But if the fundamental idea of God be that of the righteous Being, then to believe that it is not by willing and running that we obtain what we seek, but, by God's mercy, is a repetition of all that has been said already, a witness that man is merely a receiver of that good which proceeds from the Source

of good. It tells us that we do not work our way to heaven, but that heaven comes down to us to receive us and adopt us into itself. And the answer of St. Paul to the natural and continually-recurring objection, "Who hath resisted His will? Why doth He yet find fault?" is not an answer which resolves every thing into God's sovereignty, so setting aside all the previous doctrine of the epistle; but is an assertion of the great and consolatory truth, that a man submitting himself to the will of the Ruler of the universe, submits to a perfectly gracious and loving and merciful will, which is seeking to make him gracious, and merciful, and loving; and that a man resisting and disputing this will, striving against it, contending with his Maker, hardens himself, shuts himself up in self-will, becomes proud, ungracious, unloving. And this especially, when, like those with whom St. Paul is arguing, he sets up his religious privileges, his divine election, as a ground and plea for self-exaltation, as a reason for preferring himself to his brethren. Thence comes that special hardness of heart which the Jews at this time were displaying, which made them, as he says elsewhere, "enemies to God, and contrary to all men." The very pride of Pharaoh was coming out in the descendants of the men who had been delivered from the yoke of Pharaoh. In that case God's will had been manifested and accomplished through Pharaoh's hardening of the heart against His will, God's power and grace had been shown through his disobedience. It would be the same again. God's will would be shown forth through the hardening of the heart of these Israelites.

This is no doubt going down very deep. There is a will, a divine will discovered beneath and at the root of all things. Our minds reel and stagger if they do not fall prostrate in the contemplation of it. But if they do, they discover what St. Paul is teaching them, that it is a will of absolute righteousness and mercy, a will of long-suffering to those who have resisted it, a will of grace and compassion to those who are not asking for it. For the prophets of old have taught St. Paul to believe that God will manifest this mercy and grace of His to a people who have

not sought after Him, but whom He had never forgotten. He says in Hosea, "I will call that which is not my people, my people, and her that is not beloved, beloved;" an assertion which does not in the least annul but confirm the assertion made by Isaiah, that God would preserve a remnant of Israel, that the nation in its truest, highest, divinest sense, should never perish. The result then, so far as we have got, is, that the Gentiles have obtained righteousness, that righteousness which comes out of faith, the righteousness that comes out of believing in God's righteousness and trusting in it and yielding to it. In other words, a righteousness has been revealed to men, which those who claim it in the only way a spiritual possession can be claimed, become endued with really and substantially. But Israelites constantly aiming at a law of righteousness, putting it forth as their property, boasting of it, have not obtained it, have not become righteous, but have become unrighteous and hard-hearted. Why? Because they have not believed in God's righteousness as the ground of their own, but have tried to create a righteousness by their selfish acts. God has laid a foundation for them to build upon and rest upon; He has revealed His Son as the great centre and corner-stone of humanity: those who have stumbled at that stone, lose their place in the spiritual temple; those who confess it, will not be confounded.

CHAPTER X.

These last words of Isaiah seem to be very deeply fixed in the Apostle's mind. He recurs to them in the next chapter; the spirit of them goes through that chapter. He does not confine himself however to them as the support of his great proposition, that the Jewish Scriptures are throughout asserting a righteousness which lies at the foundation of things; which the law did not create but which is the foundation of the law; which men's works do not create, but which is the foundation of men's works; which belongs as much to Gentile as to Jew. Moses, he says,

has clearly distinguished that kind of righteousness which consists in the observation of precepts; "he that doeth these things shall live in it" (Lachmann reads αὐτῇ, which perhaps is better than the common reading, though that yields a good and not a very different sense). On the other hand he describes that righteousness which is the object of faith, in the words, "Say not thou, Who shall go up into the heaven? who shall go down into the deep. The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart." A wonderful passage indeed, and one which throws the clearest light upon all that the Apostle has been saying. The righteousness in which a man believes, is not at a great distance from him, not far off in some heaven, not down in some abyss; it is close to him, it is with him. He stands upon it; his faith is the confession of it as the ground of his existence. So much Moses had said; and speaking thus, the Apostle declares he had spoken of Christ, he had declared Him who was the ground of that righteousness of which the law is the outward expression. But yet that desire of ascending into the heaven and going into the deep, was a natural and human desire. All nations had felt it. All had asked what that firmament above which man was made to look up to and to gaze upon, signified to him, how he could ascend to claim the rights which he seemed to have there. All had asked what that deep beneath is which man dreams of with his spirit, that grave into which his body descends, that dark infinite which is continually proclaiming itself as the beginning and end of all things. Here come in the facts of the Gospel in connection with the principle of it. Christ hath descended into the grave and hell, Christ hath ascended into heaven. The Lord your righteousness, the Divine Word, the Son of God and the Son of Man, has penetrated the regions which you have longed to penetrate; He knows them all, He has claimed them all as His father's possession. Believing in Him, you may be perfectly delivered from that restlessness to which Moses knew that his own people and all people would be prone.

I am quite aware that in the sentence which follows the "word" is ῥῆμα not λόγος. The word of faith which the Apostle

preached was, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." There was to be an open proclamation to the whole world, that this Man was the Lord of men. If that word did not go forth, if it was choked and suppressed, the man would not believe that Jesus was his Lord. But along with this there must be the belief in the heart, that God had raised Him from the dead, the belief that this Lord was indeed the conqueror of death, otherwise there could not be salvation from the fear of death; from the tyranny of man's great enemy. "For with the heart," he says, "there is a belief unto righteousness; but with the mouth there is a confession unto salvation." Within the heart man believes in his righteous King and Deliverer, and so becomes righteous. He joins with his mouth in the confession of Him, and so he is fully set free from his oppressors. We have here the revelation I conceive of the mysterious law which declares that we are members of one body, and therefore that though it is altogether an inward and spiritual process to become partaker of righteousness, it is not and cannot be a mere individual process; we can only be saved from our evil, so large a portion of which consists in our selfishness and isolation when we confess a common Saviour and centre. The Apostle appears to connect this principle as well as the whole doctrine which he has been unfolding with the common and equal privileges of Jew and Greek. When he quotes Isaiah again, he evidently lays the emphasis on the "every one;" "for the Scripture saith *every one* that believeth in Him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be saved."

That there is a righteousness for men, for all men, a righteousness which they know of, and against which they revolt, has been the truth which St. Paul has been unfolding from the beginning of his epistle. He is now driven back upon the question which arose at the very commencement of it. "But how could the Gen-

tiles call upon One of whom they had not heard? And how could they believe unless there was some preacher to them? And how could there be a preacher if one was not sent forth?" He meets this question by quoting the words of Isaiah: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." These words undoubtedly declared that the Jews were appointed as heralds of blessings to the people of the earth. Undoubtedly the message was not heeded by the great body of those to whom it was sent; for Isaiah said, "Lord, who hath believed our report?" words clearly intimating that there is a hearing which precedes faith, as there is a word or report of Christ which is the ground of hearing. But had there not been a hearing, and a word or report, which might have been the ground of faith? What meant, then, the language of the 19th Psalm: "Their voice hath gone out into all the earth, and their words into the ends of the world?" Whether Jews preached or not, the sun, moon, and stars had been preaching to all men everywhere. "What, preaching of *Christ?*" one of our learned theologians will exclaim. Yes, sir, preaching of Christ. The Apostle taught us so in the 1st chapter; he said that God's works were not declaring a designer, not addressing subtle arguments to the understanding, but preaching to the common heart and conscience of mankind, of a God whom they were to obey, of a God near them, of a God against whom they were rebelling when they were proud, sensual, covetous. They were preaching then of a Lord of man, of a Lord of his spirit; they were preaching of that Lord, who, in the fulness of time, had taken flesh, and dwelt among them. And were not Israelites told this in their scriptures? Was it a new thing, which the Apostle was proclaiming for the first time, that other nations might be acquainted with the truths of which the Jews were the stewards? How then did they interpret the words of Moses, "I will stir you up to jealousy with that which is not a nation; with a foolish nation will I provoke you?" Did not that signify that people of other nations, not within the covenant, were admitted to the knowledge of truths against which the Jews closed their ears and

hearts? Or, again, what did they make of that audacious saying of Isaiah: "I have been found," actually found, "by those that were not seeking me; I have been made manifest to those that were not asking after me;" whereas he says to Israel, "All the day long have I stretched out my hands to a people that is disobedient and contradictory."

CHAPTER XI.

The question then recurs which cost the Apostle such infinite distress: "Hath God cast away His people?" "That cannot be," is the answer; "for I am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." How is this an answer? Certainly a very poor one if St. Paul thought as so many of his interpreters think, that his salvation was an exceptional thing, a blessing conferred on the individual Saul of Tarsus because it pleased God of His pure sovereignty that he should not suffer the doom to which the race, by the same sovereignty, had been consigned. *People* being used in the ordinary sense of the word, St. Paul could not be considered as the representative of the people; his preservation could be no proof of the fidelity of God's promises to them. But if Israel were called out by God to represent the true state of man, to declare man's relation to God, to declare that the relation is a spiritual and not a carnal one, then any person who took his own standing upon that spiritual relation of man to God, who repudiated the carnal ground of confidence, who preached to Gentiles as well as Jews, that they were spiritually related to God, such a person was not a mere fragment rescued from a rejected race; he embodied in himself the very principle of the race, the very purpose for which it had been called out. Though he were alone, the nation would survive in him. St. Paul however has no proud thought that he is alone. He recollects the case of Elias, how it seemed to him as if he were the last survivor of a God-worshipping tribe, as if the whole people were bowing to the Baal of Phœnicia; how he

was taught that there were 7000 men in the land of Ahab, in the land where there was no temple-worship, who were trusting in the Lord God of their fathers.

"Even so," he says, "there is a remnant according to the election of grace;" a remnant in Isaiah's sense, in the sense of all the prophets, not the least in the sense of the modern predestinarian; a remnant which testifies that the root of the nation has not perished, that the substance of the oak and the tiel-tree remains, though the branches have perished; not one which proves that the great majority of branches have been lopped off, and a few preserved by an arbitrary decree. But the Apostle insists upon his old doctrine. How has this remnant been preserved? Surely by the grace of God; by the grace of that loving, gracious Being from whom all good in His creatures proceeds; not by some works or deserts of theirs. It was not necessary to reassert this principle in answer to the Jew who rejected the Gospel. He had been confuted enough already. It had been demonstrated that he could only claim any election at all, any superiority to the Gentile, in virtue of God's calling, and that when he set up any boast of superiority to the Gentiles, when he said that he was better than they, he renounced that claim, and chose a test, which, unless all his history was false, must condemn him. But it was very necessary for the sake of the Christian Church, the Gentile portion of it as well as the Jewish, that this principle should be reiterated, enforced, driven home. It was perfectly certain that in the Christian Church there would arise the same lying thought which had arisen in the Jews', "In ourselves, in virtue of some acts of ours or of our covenant, we are better than other men," and that this would produce worse fruits in the time to come than it had produced already. Therefore St. Paul must lay his axe to the root of the delusion; he must show the Gentiles what the meaning, cause, and conditions, of the Jewish rejection and apostasy were, that they might understand how the like rejection and apostasy might befall themselves. How does the case stand then? Israel, the Israel after the flesh, those who have stood upon their fleshly privileges, have sought some-

thing which they have not found. But the election, those who have stood on the spiritual ground, those who have asserted their spiritual privileges, have obtained what they sought. The rest have been obdurated. They are those to whom the words of Isaiah apply ; God has given them a spirit of slumber, eyes not to see, ears not to hear. A fearful sentence surely, the most fearful that can befall a man or a nation ; but a sentence which shows that there *is* something to see, something to hear. They are in the light, or their blindness would mean nothing ; there is a voice speaking to them, or you could not impute deafness to them. Every charge against the Jews supposes ignorance of a state which actually belonged to them, ignorance brought on by a wilful struggle against a divine Guide and Teacher who was seeking to make them know themselves and Him. Every dreadful malediction, such as that which St. Paul quotes from the 109th Psalm, is a malediction upon a race of proud, self-righteous, self-seeking men, who have become brutal and cruel, because they have broken loose from a gracious and merciful Ruler, who must learn what it is to be left to stumble and prowl about in the darkness which they have chosen.

"They have stumbled," continues St. Paul. "But is it in order that they should fall?" He answers boldly, "By no means." And then he proceeds with an argument which is based upon the truth he has been asserting in so many ways in this Epistle, that neither Jews nor Gentiles were holy in themselves, that they were holy only because the root was holy ; that the Jew could not boast against the Gentile ; still less could the Gentile boast against the Jew ; that each lived only so long as it abided by faith in the root ; that each not abiding in the root, might be cut off. On the other hand, there is in the root a life and sap and fructifying power, which can restore and regenerate that which is decayed and dead. Israel not abiding in the root, claiming some independent virtue for itself, has been cutoff. The like cause will produce the like effect in the case of any nation. But let the Gentiles receive and acknowledge this mystery, however hard the apprehension of it may be ; that blindness has happened to Israel, until the fulness

of the Gentiles has entered in. And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, "there shall come a Deliverer out of Zion, and shall turn away iniquities from Jacob." Mercy to the Gentiles in this way becomes the final cause of the Jewish fall, in order that the same mercy may reach to them; for "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He may have mercy on all." I can give no interpretation of these words. I must simply leave them to interpret themselves to the mind of the reader. St. Paul did not profess to understand them himself. But he knew that they were true. He could realize their truth when he said, "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." He did not try to sound a love which he found to be unfathomable; he was content to be lost in it.

CHAPTER XII.

But that revelation of Mercy and Love, however deep and infinite, was not less the foundation of practical life. "I beseech you, Brethren," he says, "by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, acceptable to God, that reasonable service of yours; and not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of the reason, in order that you may test what is that Will of God, the good and acceptable and perfect. Rebellion against a perfect Will which has been manifesting itself in acts of love to all creatures, which has been exhibiting its power, its redeeming power, over them and through them and in them, has been the misery of Jew as well as Gentile. This has been the cause of the blindness, the incapacity of discerning the nature of that Will, which has come upon both. Simple submission, an entire surrender of the man's self to God, is that reasonable sacrifice by which the man puts himself in the right state, claims his true relation, acquires the capacity of seeing that which had been hidden from him or had been inverted. Offering up that sacrifice, there would be no more that self-exaltation, that boasting of one above another, which is the

destruction of Christian fellowship. "For," he continues, "as we have many members in one body, but all the members have not the same function, so we, the many, are one body in Christ, and we are each severally members of one another." We shall have this illustration,—this parable of parables, this which explains the very nature of parable,—of the intimate relation between the constitution of each individual and the constitution of society, so that each suggests and represents the other, drawn out at much greater length, into a greater variety of detail, in the Epistle to the Corinthians. Here it has especial reference to that renewing or re-casting of the mind, that deliverance from the form of this world, of which the Apostle had just been speaking. Jews and Gentiles had each been striving for superiority on one ground or another. The Jewish pride had trampled upon the Gentile pride, the Gentile pride had lifted itself against the Jew. The discovery that they had nothing of their own, that they were simply living upon God's free and equal grace, distributed in measures and proportions according to the capacity of each, for the good of all, showed the absurdity of this pride; the giving up of themselves as sacrifices was the renunciation of it. The foundation of the new economy is laid in the manifestation of the God of righteousness and grace; it is carried out in the reconciliation which God has effected for the race by giving up His Son for all; it is consummated when the Spirit of grace and love enables each man to live and act as the member of a body and to give up himself. With that sacrifice begins the faithful performance of all assigned tasks and offices, the knowledge on the part of each man of what he is meant to be, the cheerful doing of his own work as God's work without intruding upon the work of his brother. Humility in this sense becomes not an ornamental virtue of the individual, but a necessary condition of his place in the commonwealth. Out of it flow all other graces, zeal, fervency, hope, patience, prayer, hospitality, forgiveness of persecutors, sympathy, the abandonment of vengeance to God, the effort to subdue the evil of an enemy by good.

CHAPTER XIII.

The 13th chapter opens with words which are very familiar to us, as being the motto of sermons on the duties of subjects to their rulers; but which we do not perhaps habitually connect with those which precede or those which follow them. That submission to the divine and gracious Will, which the Apostle has been enjoining, that acknowledgment of offices and capacities assigned to each member of the commonwealth, that breaking down of the ambitious, grasping, self-exalting spirit, makes the precept, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God," the assertion of a beautiful order extending from the highest to the lowest, through every rank of creatures, man being the one who has the power of disobedience, the privilege of cheerful, voluntary, obedience. On this ground it has been contended by some, that the powers spoken of here are ecclesiastical powers, not according to the common notion, civil rulers. "Only in a church," they say, "organized according to the apostolical idea, could there exist that spiritual authority and spiritual subjection which are here enjoined. To talk of Nero's power as spiritual or divine is monstrous. It might be submitted to from conscience as well as fear, as an appointed scourge; it could never be confessed as an ordinance of God."

This is a plausible, but I apprehend a mistaken view of the case. The common one, though dry and often defended on very false grounds, is nearer to the Apostle's mind. Deriving his idea of authority from the Church, and not from the Empire, regarding this as exhibiting the principle of which that exhibited the perversion and distortion, he was obliged to affirm all power whatsoever as ordained of God, that he might protest against all arbitrary use of power, all claim of a man to be absolute, as hateful and ungodly. The Apostle could not limit his principle to the Church without destroying the claim of the Church to affirm the true principle of all human society.

I hold, therefore, that here, as elsewhere, there is a special appropriateness in the language of the Apostle to the Church which he is addressing, and that this application of his doctrine enables us to understand how all the previous teaching respecting Righteousness and Law, bore upon the condition of the Roman world as well as of the Roman Church. The rest of the chapter, in which he brings out Love as the fulfilling of Law, shows how his doctrine respecting the relation of gospel to law bears upon the condition of society as well as upon the life of individual men. The gospel of God's love and reconciliation becomes the power of God which saves or delivers a man or society from the power of self-will, and show how both may bring forth fruit to God, the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus purifying, quickening, uniting the spirits of those with whom He dwells. And this Spirit of love is calling men's spirits out of the sleep of death, is bidding them wake up, because the night is far past and the day of Christ is at hand, a day which must scatter all confused images and night-birds, and must show us how near Christ is and has always been to us. To see Him is our salvation from the darkness of the world and of our own nature; every hour that we believe in Him and trust Him must bring nearer the full discovery of Him. And therefore let us act as if the day were with us now, not doing acts of darkness, but putting on the armor of light.

CHAPTER XIV.

None of these principles can be applied to individuals alone. They are all social precepts; and because they are so they are those which most distinctly bear on the conscience and heart of each member of a society. The waking out of sleep is surely a precept addressed to the conscience of a man, if any ever was; but it is to the conscience of a man perceiving that he has not followed the law of love, that he has been living separate from his brethren, living to himself. This law of love is now brought

to bear upon a set of obviously social questions, questions concerning meats and drinks, questions about which a Church consisting of Jews and Gentiles, even if there had not been a multitude of local, philosophical, and religious divisions in each of these classes, would be sure to dispute. St. Paul at once declines to settle them. If he had settled them, there would have been no scope for the exercise of the principle, by which alone they could be really settled. As long as any man believed that he could judge his neighbor in this matter, so long the idea of a common Master and a common Spirit was feeble. The truth upon which the Church stood must be imperfectly recognized, in order that certain rules and maxims cencerning individual behavior might be dogmatically concluded. But such laws and maxims could be worth nothing, except so far as they were grounded upon the law of love and self-sacrifice, and carried it out. All allowances, all self-restraints which interfered with this were equally ungodly, and the conscience of each man would take vengeance upon him if he trifled with the conscience of another. A man must take good heed of condemning himself in that which he allows himself. These beautiful practical ethics are still grounded upon the great sacrifice to which the Apostle continually returns: "Christ pleased not Himself; for as it has been written, The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell upon me."

CHAPTERS XV. AND XVI.

This appropriation of the words of a Psalm might strike some of his readers as unnatural. Did not the words belong to a Jew? Were not they written long ago? What had they to do with the Gentiles, or with the Christian Church? The Apostle is led, in consistency with all that he has said before, to claim these Scriptures, with the history and revelation that they contain, as belonging to the Gentile no less than the Jew. Christ came as the Minister of circumcision to confirm the promises made to the fathers; Christ came to declare the Gospel to the Gentiles; as

the centre of past, and present, and future, as the foundation stone of both Jew and Gentile, the common root of the blessings to both, all these words had their meeting-point in Him; the God of consolation and hope was using them, would use them more and more, to establish the patience, and faith, and hope, and unity, of the whole body.

The Apostle goes on to speak of the hope which he cherished of seeing his Roman brethren, whom he had never seen yet, of his determination to visit them after he had been at Jerusalem, before he went to Spain. He was sure, he said, that he should come to them in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace. An arrangement strangely defeated, an assurance wonderfully fulfilled. Before he could reach Rome he must be mobbed and beaten in Jerusalem, kept under two successive Pro-Consuls in Cæsarea, brought after a shipwreck to be heard before Nero. Yet the prisoner did come in the fulness of the Gospel of peace. That Gospel spread more widely from his prison through all churches and all times than when he was able to speak freely. And this simple statement of a purpose which was to be frustrated, as far as his conception of it went, to be realized in a better and diviner way, has the same effect as the salutations in the last chapter of the letter. Like them, it does not suffer us to forget that we are reading the actual letter of an actual man, full of personal sympathies, expectations, sorrows, joys,—who often saw but a little way into the future of his own life, who may have often been deceived in other men,—while we are forced to confess that he has discovered to us the mystery of the divine purpose, the ground upon which our right and wrong, our thoughts, acts, and hopes, rest, as no man could who had not a right to say that he was the Apostle of God Himself, and was entrusted with a Gospel for man.

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

THAT this Epistle refers primarily to the Unity of the Church, and that all the questions which are discussed in it have some relation to that subject, no interpreter, perhaps, has doubted. The effort has been to ascertain how the particular circumstances of the Church in Corinth bore upon the general argument; and what that argument has to do with the allusions to Wisdom, and the Wisdom of the world, which occur so often in the earlier chapters.

These allusions give rise to the memorable declaration of the Apostle, that he had determined to know nothing among the Corinthians but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. Hence the inference has been easy and natural that the Corinthian passion for wisdom, by whomsoever promoted, was at least a great moving cause of their disunion; that the only way of making them one was to make them humble; that the only way of making them humble was to hold up to them Christ dying on the cross. How this would operate is a question which causes practical and serious diversities of opinion. The pious Romanist would urge that the contemplation of the act of crucifixion, assisted probably by some sensible image, has a special power of lowering the pride of intellect and the conceits which divide men from each other; the pious Protestant says that rather the belief in Christ as a perfect Saviour, out of wrath and sin, from which a man has in vain sought deliverance by efforts of his own, is that which empties him of his self-sufficiency. The second suspects the first of regarding Christ outwardly and carnally. The first suspects the second of regarding Christ merely as the doer of a certain work which is to be stated in the form of a proposition. The Protestant complains that one part of Christ's work is to raise us above those visible idolatries which the Romanist asso-

ciates with his cross. The Romanist replies that there can be no practical fellowship among Christians, no message to the poor, until you are able to present the actual Crucifixion more distinctly and objectively. The history of Christendom appears to sustain both objections ; it equally, I believe, refutes the uncharitableness which assumes that he who bows before a crucifix, or he who dwells upon the cross as a message of peace addressed to the burdened conscience which has been crushed under self-willed or prescribed contrivances for obtaining it, may not be a spiritual worshipper. Thus one of the great instances and causes of the division of the Church meets one on the very threshold of the classical book on its unity; seems to be suggested by that book itself.

If I sought to remove *this* perplexity by applying the explanation which St. Paul gives of his conversion and of his preaching to the Gentiles, Romanists and Protestants would be, perhaps, equally offended. They would say, "On whatever occasions the Apostle may have seen it right to speak of Christ as revealed *in* him, this is certainly not such an occasion. The teachers of wisdom whom he found, those who were drawing away the Corinthians from the simplicity of the Gospel, no doubt used this language habitually. They were mystics ; men disposed to substitute inward principles and apprehensions for outward facts. The preacher of Christ and Him crucified, was setting himself in direct antagonism to them and their refined conceits. He was affirming a *fact*, calling upon the Corinthians to acknowledge that, first of all, whatever interior illuminations might be vouchsafed to them afterwards."

The words of the Epistle, and all we know of the history, give great plausibility to this statement. Apollos was, we know, an Alexandrian teacher. Though we may not suppose, as some have done, that he was consciously a rival of St. Paul,—one who openly taught the Corinthians that he was the possessor of a deeper and more advanced lore than that which had been communicated by their spiritual father—there can he little doubt from the language of the Epistle that this was the effect which

he produced upon men already prepared to rally round a new leader, and eager to find pretexts for self-glorification. And, this being admitted, the opinion of the soundest and most intelligent critics that Apollos had been a pupil in the school of Philo, and that therefore the higher lore which he imparted would have especial reference to the Divine Word speaking inwardly to the heart and reason, may be accepted without hesitation. Such an hypothesis explains the character of at least one of the parties to which the Apostle alludes, is in consistency with the circumstances of Corinth, throws light upon a number of passages which without it are obscure.

In the teaching of an Alexandrian, educated as all thoughtful deep-minded Alexandrian Jews were, the Wisdom or the Word would be expressions continually recurring. One mighty in the Scriptures, like Apollos, would trace the use and application of them through the Proverbs, through all the Prophets, would probably discover hints of them in the forms and ceremonies of the law, even in the history of the early Patriarchs. Whatever impression he produced on those of his hearers who had frequented the synagogue,—and that we may easily suppose would have been considerable,—such discourses, nay, the mere repetition of language so identified with Greek feelings, so much denoting the very object of Greek inquiry, would come with the most startling force to those few cultivated members of the Church who had listened to arguments in the Porch or the Academy. With their Greek vivacity and passion they would at once attach themselves to the eloquent man as to one who spoke the very thing which their previous habits, perhaps their previous struggles of mind, had led them to desire; who showed them that it could be reconciled with the language of the sacred book. now no more merely a book for the Hebrew and the circumcised, —who pointed out evident links of association between it and the most interior part of the New Testament revelation. Many of those who only belonged to the crowd, and would never have been admitted into the halls of philosophy, but who were still Greeks, who had been used to exercise their faculties of obser-

vation and criticism in judging of theatrical compositions, who had travelled and picked up a number of scattered thoughts and speculations, all whose powers of reflection had been awakened to fresh life and directed to the highest objects by the Gospel, would claim their privilege also to follow the teacher when he spoke of mysteries which, as Corinthians, they had desired to know, into which, as Christians, they might claim to be initiated.

It seems to me beyond all question that the Apollos party in the Corinthian Church was formed in this way, and that this was the character which it must have habitually assumed. And I am far from denying—the language of the first four or five chapters almost justifies us in affirming—that this was the party against which the others whereof St. Paul speaks were protesting. A school which exalted spiritual intuitions, an internal guide, as the Alexandrian school was wont to do, and which appealed, as they did, to the Old Testament, would naturally call forth the opposition of those Jewish Christians who had been brought up under the Pharisees, and who had received Jesus as fulfiling the Law and the Prophets, taken in their obvious historical sense. These would call themselves after the name of Peter, if not at first, yet as soon as they had evoked a third party which set up the New Testament as the express and definite message of salvation to the Gentiles—at once against their literal Judaism, and against the spiritual Judaism of the Alexandrians. The name of Paul would be equally a plea for saying: The Old Covenant, to which you followers of Cephas seem to be leading us back, is abrogated; we are not under the Law: Christ has come to fulfil the promises to the Gentiles—most of all, to bestow the Spirit upon us. Why then do you followers of Apollos take us back to the ideas and allegories of the old time? That there should be a fourth class pretending to despise all human and secondary teaching, to cast aside the wisdom of Apollos, the dogmatism of the Cephasites, even the liberty of Paul, and to adhere simply to the words of Christ himself, we might easily conclude, if we had not a clear intimation of the fact in the Epistle itself.

It being admitted then that the primary danger to the Corinthians at this time lay in the Apollos school, and that the formal development of the others may have been owing to the rise of this, the question to be considered is, how St. Paul met that danger, and how far his manner of treating it was effectual for healing the schisms in the Church generally.

There is no question about the preaching of Christ crucified; that, we are all agreed, was his method; his words are too distinct and emphatic to be gainsaid. But as there is a dispute what these words denote, what the preaching of Christ crucified in his sense of it was, we had better seek for some statement of his own on the subject which may carry us beyond the mere phrase. I find one in the first chapter: "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness: but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God." All will agree that this is a cardinal passage, one to which we may well refer as determining the sense of others; one which indirectly introduces the whole doctrine of the Cross. What does St. Paul say in it? We have here the favorite words of the Apollos school; Wisdom and Power. It is the *Σοφία* of God, the inner *Δυνάμις* of God, which St. Paul purposes to declare to the Corinthians; only he says, GOD has declared them more perfectly than all my fine discourses can. The Cross of Christ is the manifestation of both. Because the foolishness of God, he goes on in his bold way, is wiser than man, and the weakness of God is stronger than man. You say there is a Word, or Wisdom; a Living Word; Wisdom which is the expression of God Himself. I confess it. And I say that living Word has come forth and spoken. That Word has proved Himself to be living by acting, suffering,—mightiest wonder of all,—by dying; that Word or Wisdom has proved Himself in this act of dying to be the expression of God; for in his death has come forth the very innermost meaning of God's character, His essential love; yea, and his essential power.

It is a mighty, startling proposition; but herein lay St. Paul's Gospel. It had pleased God to reveal His Son in him that he might preach Him among the Gentiles, who had struggled with him long, against whom he had been kicking, who had shown Himself to be the master; his spirit had bowed to Him as its Lord; he had asked what he was to do. The answer had come that he was to publish this Lord to all men as their Lord, to tell all men that he was with them, and was claiming their submission. But was he testifying of an unknown teacher; one who had never yet shown what he was, who was only speaking in the secret depths of the individual heart? If it had been so, his message might have been to a few elect spirits, such as Philo talked of; initiated men who forsook the vulgar herd, and pursued the divine Wisdom. But it could not have been to the Gentile, to men, to the world. Only if this Word had revealed Himself by human acts; by acts done on this earth; by acts open, apparent; by bodily, physical, mortal acts, such as the delicate Alexandrian Theosophist did not like to dwell on or meddle with; only then could St. Paul fulfil the commission which he had received; only then could he really set forth that dominion of the spiritual power over the fleshly, of the divine, and mysterious, and inward, over the human, and outward, and tangible, which the Alexandrian boasted of. They must not stand aloof from each other; they must come into conflict, if the strength of each is to be proved.

This preaching of the Cross, as God's manifestation of His own Wisdom and Righteousness, is neither the Romanist nor the Protestant preaching, as they stand out in opposition to each other. It does not appeal to the senses, or to the intellect primarily; it goes to a region deeper than both. But it does justice both to the Romanist and to the Protestant method; it explains their relation to each other, and why each is by itself unsatisfactory. The sensible image corresponds to the spiritual reality. Christ Himself must be as actually an object to the spiritual organ as the Crucifix is to the outward eye. The forms of sense are therefore the best, nay, if we follow Scripture, the only forms

which can express spiritual truths; all attempts to translate them into intellectual propositions weaken their force. But on the other hand, the longing of men for deliverance from mere sensible material things, from idols, is a most genuine longing, one which the true preacher seeks to awaken. It is connected, though it must not be identified, with the longing for deliverance from moral evil. That arises when the man is conscious that he himself is his tormentor, that he has bowed to outward things because he has wandered from some higher centre. The announcement of that spiritual centre,—the preaching of Christ as the power which is attracting him and all creatures to itself, withdrawing them from the material idols which have kept them apart, raising them out of themselves,—fulfils both purposes. It is not a charm, or mesmeric influence, produced upon the outward man; it is not a formal proposition, to be comprehended by the understanding; it is a message to that which is most human, most universal in the man concerning Him in whom only that which is human and universal can be realized, can overcome that which is partial and warring.

We thus are able to understand the course of the Apostle's thoughts. He finds the Corinthians full of good gifts, deficient in none. But there are divisions among them. They are ranged in parties, under leaders. What does this mean? They are Paulites! What, were they baptized into the name of Paul? He thanks God he baptized very few of them, lest they should think he baptized them into his name. He was sent to preach the Gospel, to exhibit Him who was the Wisdom and Power of God, to tell not the wise, or mighty, but all, the most despised and foolish: "Ye are called of God, Christ is made unto you wisdom and righteousness, and santification, and redemption." He had proclaimed a common foundation for them all to rest upon—a human and Divine foundation. And they, instead of resting upon it, are setting up a set of separate teachers, are making Christ a minister of division; as if he came to establish factions, not as the Lord of Man.

CHAPTER II.

This Gospel Paul had resolved to preach as broadly, as simply as possible. He had set forth Christ, and Him crucified, to all. He would not have their faith stand in his words or wisdom, but in God's power. But was he then not preaching a mystery? Was he not preaching the wisdom of God? Assuredly this was a very profound mystery, one which the learned rabbis of the Jews, and the Roman rulers of the earth, were equally unable to penetrate, or they would not have crucified the King of Men, the Lord of Glory. It was a mystery which it required a Divine light to reveal. Eye had not seen, ear had not heard, the things which God had prepared for them that love him. But God had revealed them by His Spirit. None can make us know God but the Spirit of God; even as none can know what is in a man but the spirit of man. And this spiritual revelation the mere psychical or natural man does not receive; there must be a spiritual organ to receive a spiritual communication.

Here St. Paul touches the very heart of the Alexandrian teaching. Does he refute it? No! he adopts the very principle, nay, the very terms of it. You say there is a mystery to be known. Certainly. By the initiated? Certainly. By the spiritual organ, not the mere ψυχή? Certainly. You say the spiritual man is above other men? Certainly.—Where then do we differ? Only when you would make the mystery not an eternal, universal reality, but some apprehension of particular men. Only when you make the initiated a peculiar set of wise or spiritual men, and not those who are content to give up their wisdom that they may be taught to see what is true for them and for all. Only when you make the spiritual organ not an open eye to receive God's light which flows forth for all; but a peculiar organ in which peculiar men may glory. Only when the spiritual man, in fact, becomes the carnal, the natural, psychical man; for that he does become when he glorifies his

individual soul; his separate wisdom above *the* wisdom; the Divine wisdom which is for MAN.

St. Paul applies the words, "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he might instruct Him?" to this case. Who can measure God's acts and thoughts by the standard of his own narrow soul? What an utter contradiction is implied in the partial, the individual, comprehending the Universal! But is the knowledge of God therefore impossible? Has it been a dream of the Philo school, of all the philosophers with whom that school had sympathy, that they proposed this to themselves as the end of their seeking? "No," he answers; "we have the mind of Christ. We are not tied to the measures and standards of the individual soul. The mind which formed all things, by which all things consist, is with us. Christ is in us; we may know Him if we will give up ourselves."

CHAPTER III.

He proceeds to strike a very hard blow at the Alexandrian conceit, even while he recognizes one of the Alexandrian distinctions. "I have fed you," he says, "with milk, and not with meat." "Oh!" they exclaim, "then you accept our division of the novices and the adepts, of those who must receive truth in sensual forms, and those who can receive it in its pure essence." Stay a moment.—It is to you the adepts, the aspirants after celestial illumination, to you who could not bear the vulgar herd of ordinary men, who thought you had a special discernment of spiritual mysteries—it is to you I have administered this food of children. It is what you want. It is the only thing you can bear; for I must tell you plainly. You are *not* what you fancy yourselves. You are not spiritual men. You are emphatically carnal men; for division is the sign of carnality. Self-exaltation is the sign of carnality. As long as you are setting up earthly teachers you must be carnal men. What are those teachers? What are they sent to do? They are messengers who

are to build you up as a Church upon the only foundation upon which human beings can stand. *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* Here is the great doctrine of the Epistle ; here is the condemnation of Paulites, Apollosites, Cephasites. Here is the justification of all three. Here is the ground of Church unity. The foundation *is* laid. Christ is at the root of humanity. The preaching of Apollos, the preaching of Paul, can but declare things as they are, cannot change facts in the least. We may proclaim—it is our calling to proclaim—the great Law and Order of the Universe. He or I may proclaim it best. God will judge of that. We may put very precious things on this foundation, or very worthless things. Whatever we have put upon it will be tried by fire. *We* shall be tried by fire. But the foundation will remain. And *you* will remain. For you, and not our notions, are the building which God is erecting on this foundation. You are the temple of God. If we defile that temple God will destroy us. And therefore, if you have a right view of your own glory, you will give up glorying altogether in your wisdom and in your party-leaders. All things are yours,—life, death, things present, things to come ; Apollos, Cephas, Paul, all nature, all men. For you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

CHAPTER IV.

"What are we," he goes on, "Apollos and I, whom you have been making into heads of parties, and so destroyers of Christ's Church? Servants of Christ, existing to testify of Him as the great Master ; stewards of the mysteries of God, appointed to make the whole household sharers in the deep truths which lie beneath us all. We are stewards for you ; but you are not judges whether we discharge our office faithfully or not. God will judge us. His Light will burst in upon us, and that revelation will show what every one of us is, and what he has been doing. You cannot judge us ; we cannot judge ourselves. Our

consciences may not reproach us with unfaithfulness, but that is not our justification. Give up therefore this miserable attempt to exercise a power which you are not endowed with, which is dividing you from each other, which is setting up each against the other." Here the Apostle lays bare their deepest wound. He does it gently, lovingly, even with humor; but he cuts fearlessly; his ridicule wonderfully combines inward affection and outward courtesy with sharpness and severity. You Corinthians have become wise, great men, judges and kings. Would we could share your exaltation! Would we could sit with you on your high judgment-throne! But that is not our vocation. We apostles must be God's outcast, the offscouring of the earth. This is what God has appointed for *us*. I sometimes think he means to use us as the Romans use the criminals in the amphitheatre, whom they bring out when the best part of the amusement is over, merely that the wild beasts may devour them. St. Paul feels that he has said bitter words; such a contrast between the self-conceited pupils and those whom they pretend to make their guides, must have been felt by all of them who were not quite besotted with intellectual or spiritual pride. But he claims the right of a father to speak to his children; whatever other instructors they may have, that is his title. He does not want the dignity of a sophist or a leader. That he disclaims as inconsistent with the Gospel he has preached; with the very existence of the Church: the other he claims because he has preached the Gospel, because the Church has need of paternal government, and cannot dispense with the most strict exercise of it.

CHAPTER V.

An instance occurs immediately in which the Apostle, though absent, asserts, and uses this power. The passage is as important as any in the Epistle, important for its own sake, and for the elucidation of the general subject. This Church, which was so

proud of its spiritual illumination, had among its members, one who had committed fornication with his father's wife. Nothing had been done to remove the offender from the communion of the Church. St. Paul pronounces his sentence in a dreadful formula. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the members of the Church being gathered together, and he being in Spirit present among them, with the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, he decrees that a man who has committed a crime of this kind be delivered to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

This is undoubtedly *the* formula of excommunication. Modern Protestants know not what to make of such a decree. It cannot mean exactly what it says. It must be merely a phrase to express the exclusion of a man from the fellowship of believers. Romanists say, What is there in the anathemas of which you accuse the middle ages, in the curses which Irish priests pronounce at the altar, that goes beyond this? To the first, I answer, Certainly, the phrase means exclusion from the fellowship of the Church; but what does *that* mean? St. Paul might have said, Do not let him partake of the Eucharist, or, Have no familiar intercourse with him. Why talk about Satan, and delivering to Satan, if the words signify nothing? Are they words to play with? The Corinthians were all too fond of rhetoric; St. Paul had solemnly pronounced it unsuitable to the herald of a great Truth. Was this just the moment to forget his rule? I apprehend we cannot evade the conclusion, that he looked upon the Gospel as the proclamation of a deliverance from devil-worship, devil-service: that he looked upon the Church as a body of men united in the confession of Him who had come to destroy the works of the devil. Any act which implied a distinct renunciation of Christ the righteous Lord, a distinct assertion of fleshly self-will, implied also the choice of the devil as a master; it was an act of surrender to him. And this surrender may be of such a broad obvious kind as to make it the duty of the Church to deal with its member as if he were that which he chose to be. For his own sake this was necessary. To treat him as an out-

cast was the best way of really keeping him in the unity of the Church. Let him be delivered to Satan for the punishment of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. I cannot dilute or explain away words which seem to me to contain the very essence of Christian philosophy and Christian benevolence. If priests had studied them and laid them to heart, how impossible it would have been for them to sport with curses as they have done! For the truth must be spoken plainly. Whatever they have pretended, their deliverance of a man to Satan has not been the last awful reluctant declaration, that a man who has wilfully chosen an evil master shall feel the bondage that he may loathe it, and so turn to his true Lord that he may find here, or hereafter, the emancipation which he came upon earth and went down into hell, to effect. The priest's malediction has, in innumerable cases, been an invocation or prayer to the devil as the real and only God whom he worshipped, to punish the enemies whom he hated, and of whom he wished to rid himself.

The law of excommunication, as far as it regards the sufferer, is clearly expounded in these remarkable sentences. The ground of excommunication, as it regards the Church, is exhibited in the next verses: "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." "Ye are unleavened." Here are texts of mighty subjects: the history of the Church is nothing but the expansion and illustration of them. The glorying of the Corinthians, as we have seen already, did not imply a high estimate of their position as Churchmen; they exulted in their individual wisdom; right views and high intuitions were boasted of by one man or one party as an exclusive property. To set before the Church, as a Church, its sanctity, its dignity, is the Apostle's method of correcting this tendency. Ye are a holy body; a body from which the leaven has been cast out. The pure Paschal Lamb has been sacrificed for you. In Him you are perfectly pure and holy. Impurity comes in with separation; with men choosing to have a way of their own, choosing to break loose from the law and principle of the divine fellowship.

That is the leaven; the leaven of self-will, self-pleasing, which Christ seeks to cast out, and which when we come as a united body to the feast we seek to have cast out. Where this selfish principle has reached a head, has put itself forth in some flagrant overt act, like that of the man who has committed fornication with his father's wife, the holiness of the body must be asserted by the exision of the particular member: a doctrine involved in the very existence of a Church, but which may be put forward with such prominence as to destroy the truth from which it springs. Excommunication may be contemplated apart from communion. It may be fancied that a Church is a set of persons possessing certain special qualifications of faith or holiness, and that all are to be prevented from participating in its ordinances who cannot prove that they possess these qualifications. Thus excommunication will become the rule, and the reason on which St. Paul bases it is no longer tenable; nay, is directly set at nought. The body is not pure in itself from its relation to Christ; but pure from the apprehensions, graces, gifts, of those who belong to it. Hence an opening to all the pride, spirit of judging, hypocrisy and immorality which St. Paul saw with such trembling at Corinth.

In the next sentences of the chapter he strikes at another form of these evils. He had bidden them avoid fornicators, covetous men, extortioners, idolaters. The exhortation might be, no doubt had been, misunderstood and turned to mischief. They had not actually stood aloof from such persons; they could not; all intercourse with society would have been at an end if they had, all power of benefiting it. But they could judge and despise the heathens even while they mixed among them; they could count themselves pure, at least in comparison with them. Did they? then let them see that they were pure. What had they to do with judging the heathen? Who gave them such a commission? How did they know how much evil entered into the fornication or extortion of an idolater? But they were witnesses and protestants for the existence of a righteous society in which men loved their neighbors, and therefore could not defile

or hurt them. Let them keep that body to its office. God will judge the outlying world.

CHAPTER VI.

Every Greek characteristic reappeared, as it was sure to do, in the Church; the love of litigation could not be absent. No more formal contradiction of the nature and profession of a Church could well be exhibited in the sight of the heathens than that of brother going to law with brother. Whence came it? From the same cause as the parties and the glorification of individual gifts. The feeling of brotherhood was not realized among them; they would not understand the functions of a spiritual body; they were merely acting like a set of atoms accidentally associated. To make them conscious of the greatness of their position as a body, is here, as always, the means of crushing their conceit as individuals. What, he says, you must go to heathens to judge little matters about property! Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? How could St. Paul take it for granted that they *knew* this? Had he told them so in any part of his preaching which we do not possess? Had it been a matter of special revelation to him and them? I apprehend that he could not have given this form to the question if he had not meant them to understand that such a function was implied in the very nature of a spiritual society. "The spiritual man," he had said, "judgeth all things; but he himself is judged of no man." When we are raised to a higher ground we have power of overlooking and comparing that which lies below. When we really see all things in God's light, and are partakers of his mind—the fleshly temper which bewilders our perceptions and makes our decisions partial, being overcome,—then we must exercise in its fullest measure that wonderful discernment with portions of which the humble and meek who forget themselves are endued here.

The want of this power of judging arose in the case of the

Corinthians from no intellectual defect—strictly so called. They came behind in no gift. It came from intellectual pride. And yet see how that pride punished itself; what practical feebleness, what confessed incapacity was the fruit of it. They actually could not find persons competent to pronounce judgment in little disputes of property which arose among their own members. What! they with their great illumination, their high intuitions, had not a class of men endued with this inferior species of sagacity! The sarcasm is bitter; the Corinthian must have felt it. But what an insight is given us into the mind of the Apostle and his view of the Church! The high gifts and the low were equally bestowed by the eternal Spirit. Prudence dwells with wisdom. A power of dealing with the pettiest details of life is just as much a divine endowment, just as necessary to a divine society, as the apprehension of spiritual truths.

The existence of these lawsuits did not, however, reveal merely the ignorance of the Corinthians; it showed a positive moral defect. How was it that they could not bear wrongs one from another? How was it that they committed wrongs one against another? Did they not know that the Gospel was a message of deliverance, of purgation from moral evils? Did they not know that these were the hinderances—the absolutely fatal hinderances—to their living in God's kingdom, to their enjoying its treasures? No! this simple truth was just the one which they had not entered into, which had need to be repeated in their ears. They were too fine, too spiritual, to think about gross outward evils or detestable habits of mind and character. They were carried into a higher region; all high and divine mysteries were unfolded to their gaze. And in the mean time, while they were entertaining themselves with these, they were quite forgetting that low grovelling sensualism in which they had once been plunged; they were forgetting that all the temptations and motives to it were just as strong in them now as they had ever been. They had been washed, they had been sanctified; while they claimed their relation to Christ, their membership in him, all these moral corruptions, inward and outward, were as far

from them as the east from the west. But they were never far from the fleshly heart, from the mere earthly nature. They were continually creeping about each of them, ready to start up and assert their dominion. See how covetousness, envy, strife, were invading them! "What!" some one of the Paulites would exclaim, "are you—the preacher of Christian liberty, of faith which raises us above law—become a mere moralist? are you going to tell us of this thing and that which we must not touch, or taste, or handle, lest we should be defiled? I am going to do no such thing, he says. I tell you, as I have told you before, all things are lawful to me. God has given us the earth to enjoy. He has given us the appetites and senses wherewith to enjoy it. But he has not given us the earth to be our master. He has not given us our appetites and senses to be our masters. And therefore if these are acquiring power over me, they are destroying that liberty which God has given me. The belly, and the meats which feed the belly, are both good; but I am not to be a servant to either. God will destroy them, and means me to live on. A plain statement, very commonplace and vulgar doubtless, in the judgments of many of the Apollos as well of the Pauline party; but also exceedingly needful for both. It is a distinction everlastingly fresh and vital, one which finds new applications for itself, and bitter experiences to confirm the application, every day and hour of our lives. It is the text to the great subject of Christian liberty upon which St. Paul will speak more at large hereafter. Perhaps we shall find that he offers some most valuable illustrations of the principle at once in reference to a subject of which he had already spoken, and to some topics respecting which the Corinthians had consulted him.

Every one, I suppose, has at times been troubled by the question, Why did the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem, in the rules which they drew up for the guidance of the Gentile converts, mix up the prohibition of a moral evil with positive precepts which were intended only for a certain period and a particular state of society? Various answers have been given; three which are of great weight. The first is, that fornication was so closely con-

nected with idolatry, and became in certain festivals and services so much a part of religion, that the prohibition of contact with idolatrous offerings was a protection against the moral transgression, and, at the same time, pointed out the inward root of it. The second is, that men brought under a spiritual government, and exempted from the ordinances of the old law, had need to be reminded of the sacredness of law as such; to be taught that there was an authority which it behoved them to obey, even if they could not discover the reason of its commands. The third is, that the relation of Jews and Gentiles in the Christian Church made it a sin on the part of the Gentiles to do acts, innocent in themselves, which would have scandalized those who had been bred under the old Covenant. All these suggestions are, I think, entitled to great consideration, and are full of instruction for later times. But I do not know that we shall profit by them as we might, if we assume that the difficulties which occur to us did not also occur to the churches which received the Apostolical rescript; and if we do not expect from St. Paul himself an examination of the difficulty, and a resolution of it which will correct and comprehend our imperfect experiments.

All things, he had said, are lawful to me—God has provided meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; all we have to do is to judge carefully in each case when and how his gifts interfere with spiritual liberty. But he perceives at once, from his knowledge of the Corinthians, and of the actual abuses which had arisen in the Church, how this doctrine would be misinterpreted. Fornication might be brought, as it has been so often brought, under the same category with mere *excesses;* it might be regarded as governed by the same rule of personal expediency as the use of meats. No! he says. The fact that we are members of Christ, that we belong to him who has raised and redeemed our bodies, gives this offence quite a different charaeter. The Gospel does what the Law cannot do. It could prohibit *adultery;* the violation of a relation and ordinance. It was bound to do this. But those evils which affect society most grievously

through the moral injury which they do to the conscience of the wrong-doers, but which do not directly break any formal and recognized bonds, these it may frown at, but cannot reach. Most fatal consequences would follow (as the Puritan legislation in North America has sufficiently proved to us) if it attempted with its rough hand to deal with them. Only in the acknowledgment of a spiritual relation to Christ, and of a spiritual relation to each other in Him, only in the belief that our bodies are the Temples of the Holy Ghost, lies any effectual protection against this evil.

CHAPTER VII.

The transition is easy from these hints and warning to certain questions which the Corinthians had asked him respecting marriage and the comparative advantages of it generally, and, in particular cases, over single life. Every one is struck by the unusual cautiousness and diffidence of St. Paul, when he approaches these topics. If we compare the letter of Gregory the Great to Augustine in Bede, in answer to inquiries not altogether dissimilar, respecting the Anglo-Saxon converts, we see at once how immeasurably more decisive and minute the Pope is than the Apostle. The effect of St. Paul's phrases, "I speak by permission, not commandment"—"I speak, not the Lord," on his readers has been curious. Out of mere reverence to Scripture, a great many seem disposed to disbelieve the Apostle, and to deny the distinction which he himself makes. They are afraid that they shall not know what they may accept as divine, if they once suppose that some words may be from the Master, and some from the servant. Such reverence, however natural, approaches so near to the greatest irreverence, nay, disbelief, that one must at least try to get some better in exchange for it. But this is not all. I cannot help thinking that not a few are inclined to value these passages, in which the Apostle speaks with hesitation, *above* the others. They fancy that when the Lord

speaks the rules are general, such as commonplace people are to follow ; that the Apostle's hints are for the refined, the saintly, those who are aiming at a specially elevated standard. Now I have no doubt that there is a truth latent in this notion, but that it is most grievously distorted, nay, utterly inverted. I do not think that we can find any better way of separating the precept which is announced as divine, from the suggestion which St. Paul deliberately calls "his," than by regarding the one as of universal obligation ; the other as appertaining to local circumstances and individual temperaments. Those principles which the teacher, sent forth by Christ and endued with the Spirit, feels and knows to be grounded in the Being of God and in his relations to humanity, these he propounds absolutely, unreservedly, without the slightest hesitation, "they are the Lord's." All that pertains to the nature and permanence of marriage, all prohibition of separation at the mere pleasure of the party, or from any notion of religious advantage, are of this kind. These ride not only over private judgment, but over the authority of Apostles, Bishops, Churches, Councils ; they have to enunciate them ; they cannot alter them or dispense with them in the least. But when the teacher is consulted about that which may be right for one and wrong for another, he ought to tremble, not because he does not think he has the Spirit of God, but because he may blunder in the application of a truth which the Spirit has enabled him to realize, and because he will certainly do mischief if that which he means for a part is applied for a whole—if the rules for one age or locality are imposed upon another. It is not merely the case of conscience itself which calls for a special wisdom to decide it. Another and more terrible difficulty arises from the morbid feeling of the patient, that universal principles are nothing in comparison of his or her idiosyncrasy. Any one who will deal with that first, who will find or enact a law to provide for it, is likely to be esteemed a sympathethic friend and guide, and to be made an absolute authority. Hence there is an opening at once for spiritual quackery,—and for a spiritual despotism, whenever the

special receipts and prescriptions are collected and organized and put forth for the direction of all diseased people.

The more I think of this chapter, the more it seems to me in this point of view one of the most important in the New Testament; not for what it pronounces so much as for this very distinction between that which is to be and is not to be pronounced; for the sacredness which it puts upon the universal; for the uncertainty in which it leaves the particular, with just so much of hint and suggestion as may assist the conscience, not overwhelm or torment it; with just so much notice of peculiar circumstances and necessities as make us feel that the inhabitants of each country and times have a distinct personal responsibility in the application of great universal laws to their own condition—that they may profit by the experience of others differently circumstanced, but must not be bound by it. These lessons St. Paul teaches, and they will be found, I suspect, of infinitely more value in the study of Church History, and in the emergencies of our own lives, than the direct Yes! or No! which the Corinthian querists desired to extract from him, and which readers of the present day also wish that he had uttered.

It must always be remembered that a great disease—perhaps the great disease—of the Corinthian Church was the desire in the different classes of its members to have a law and standard of their own. The Apollos party would fain believe that their intuitions gave them a hold of truths which did not belong to the vulgar. The Paulites would claim a liberty which they despised the poor Judaists for being afraid or unable to assert. Those Judaists had their conceit that they were vastly better and safer than those who cast any old ceremony or tradition of the law aside. The Apostle had been combating this tendency through this Epistle; he was not likely all at once to encourage it by laying down a general code of laws respecting marriage for those who wished to keep up an average tone of devotion, and a special code for those who aspired to greater heights in it. Such a design has been imagined in the chapter, but with the least possible excuse from the language of St. Paul himself. There

is no question at all of high devotion; the Corinthians were tempted to very low vices; the point which the Apostle considers here is how they may best avoid them. The meaning and sanctity of marriage, as it is exhibited to us in the Old Testament; marriage as a means of spreading the kingdom of God, and as a witness of God's relation to the chosen nation—the sanctity of marriage in the highest Christian sense, as it is set forth in the Epistle to the Ephesians, is not considered here at all. St. Paul is asked, probably by some mystic of the Apollos school, questions which will be perfectly understood by any reader of middle-age history; he answers as plainly and briefly as he can, without going into detestable and demoralizing minutiæ, or yet affecting any circumlocution and false delicacy, that it is well or honorable for a man not to touch a woman at all, but that the conduct in wedlock, which they supposed holy and exalted, was neither honorable nor safe. The whole paragraph must be taken together, not one part separate from the rest, and the introduction, "as concerning the things which ye wrote unto me," must not be forgotten; for it explains why such a topic is touched upon at all. Next he has been asked respecting the παρθένοι and χήραι, who had probably undertaken certain offices in the Church, whether they had better marry or remain single. Some of them had apparently a great desire to marry, some of them, perhaps, set it down as a grievous offence or fault. He says he believes they will do their work with less distraction if they are single; but if they find it otherwise let them marry. The object is moral freedom, ability to serve God; let each man and woman keep that object in sight: how it may be attained he cannot pronounce generally, for each one has his own gift and calling; but singleness he finds better for himself, and he suspects they will have some trouble in the flesh if they marry. St. Paul does not put abstinence from marriage in his own case on the plea of its being more favorable to holiness, but simply upon its leaving him more free to do the work in which he is engaged as a missionary. When he speaks of them, his fear for them is evidently from their very low estimate

of marriage, which fear is balanced by another that makes him cautious of dissuading them from it. The case, however, to which the words, "They shall have trouble in the flesh, but I spare you," are referred, seems a peculiar one. Taking all the clauses of a passage together (which has driven such grave interpreters as Locke into the most incredible outrages upon language and sense), it seems reasonable to suppose that certain young women had been placed under the guardianship of men, probably deacons of the Church, to educate them for a church-office, and that when they arrived at a marriageable age the two parties had been brought into unpleasant and dangerous relations, which had led to the questions, whether the guardians might marry their wards, whether they might marry them to other people, whether they might both maintain their present position. Where the last course can be followed, where the man has thorough self-command, and nothing has been done to wound the delicacy and feelings of the woman, St. Paul, under all the circumstances, recommends it as best, though either of the other alternatives he looks upon as perfectly harmless, and where all the conditions he presumes are not present, as advisable. Of course I may be guessing wrongfully about the peculiar difficulty; other suggestions may meet all the points in the Apostle's statements better; but I do not think that any careful reader can doubt that it was an urgent necessity of a complicated kind—though one which might with some variations often recur—which demanded his judgment. But the inference I would deduce from the fact, is, that the whole chapter is a manual worth the continual study of the spiritual *doctor dubitantium* precisely because it teaches him that if he would follow one of the highest and most inspired of guides he must not give himself airs of certainty respecting points where certainty is not to be had, must not fear to show those who are consulting him, that he has doubts, and that he dares not relieve them from the responsibility of judging by taking it upon himself.

CHAPTERS VIII. IX. AND X.

The chapters which follow ought by no means to be separated. Nor ought we, for the sake of dwelling on the details of them, important as they seem, to overlook the rapid succession of the thoughts in the Apostle's mind. The question to be discussed has probably been suggested by one of the Paulite school. "Surely that prohibition of eating things sacrificed to idols is a restraint upon the liberty which you have claimed for us! Is the meat offered to idols not good, not a creature of God? Is it made evil by the absurdity of those who use it? What is an idol? Nothing, a mere fiction of the brain! Can a fiction destroy a fact?" Very good reasoning, says St. Paul. A sign of great knowledge. But alas! of too much knowledge! Of that knowledge which has not yet allowed you to make the discovery, We know nothing. An idol *is* nothing. However many gods and lords there may be, for us members of Christ, united to him, there is but one God, even the Father, and that one Lord by whom are all things. And upon the ground of that knowledge you establish a *right* to do certain things which give your brethren pain; nay, which would actually be sinful to them if they imitated you. Because you have but one God, and He has withdrawn you from these dividing idols, therefore each must set up his own knowledge against the other! You who call yourselves by the name of Christ are content to grieve, yea mortally to grieve, a brother for whom Christ died!

And this you do because I have preached liberty to you. I *have* preached it. And now consider how I assert it in my own case. You will not deny, I suppose, that I might, if I pleased, claim to live by the Gospel which I proclaim. The law permits me to do it. Reason permits it. God has appointed it. I might marry, I might support a wife at the expense of the Church. Have I done so? Have I asked payment of you? No, I claim the privilege of not doing it. I assert my right in spite

of those legal, those evangelical provisions, to preach the Gospel without being paid for it. That is my reward. The Gospel I must preach whether I wish it or no. I am a steward, and I must dispense what I am entrusted with. But I may have the luxury—the hire—of doing my work gratuitously. In all cases I wish to act upon this principle. The liberty I claim is the liberty of showing deference to the habits, feelings, prejudices of Jews and Gentiles. I do not cast off the law because it is a burden to me, and I crave for independence. I cast it off that I may win Gentiles; that I may assert their share in the divine Communion. That is to be our one object, the diffusion of the Gospel, the establishment of the universal fellowship. But if we have an object steadily before us, we do as the wrestlers do, train ourselves for it; submit to hardships for the sake of it. Wishing for the prize they keep themselves on low diet and to severe exercise. With this prize before me, of making men sharers in God's love and kingdom, I must do the like. I do not want the freedom to eat this thing or that. I want the freedom which comes when my body is my servant; when I can make it in all things obey my orders. If it obtains the mastery over me, I shall be found good for nothing after I have told others how they may be God's children and the citizens of his kingdom.

Here are two distinct paradoxes, one growing out of the other. I submit myself to other men because I am free. I bring my body into subjection that I may keep my freedom. He follows out the last in the next chapter, making it bear directly upon some of the leading fallacies of the Corinthians, especially of the party among them which called itself after his name. They supposed that having such great names put upon them, forming an Ecclesia, being called of God, saints, sanctified in Christ Jesus, they had attained a safe position which exempted them from all necessity of that self-restraint which might be very proper for them who were in a lower condition. To remove this impression he reminds them that the condition of belonging to a called body was not a new one. The Old Testament was the

history of such a body, of men who had been consecrated to God by a most real baptism ; who had the most certain sacraments of His presence and regard. He takes it for granted, as if it were involved in all his teaching, that Christ was with them, and that their manna, and the water from the rock expressed the direct relation in which they stood to Him as their invisible guide and the Lord of Nature. Being in this state, the history continually describes them as murmuring, lustful, cowardly, and as undergoing the sorest punishments. They must lay the lesson to heart. The old book told facts concerning human beings which must be facts for all time. It showed that the state of the election and consecration to God, instead of making it impossible for those who were in it to be faithless, disobedient, godless, brought out their faithlessness, disobedience, godlessness, into the strongest relief. The temptations of the outward world were not less to those whom the invisible God had called than to other men ; the temptations of their own fleshly nature were not less. There was indeed always a way out of the temptation. The Protector was at hand ; they were compassed about with the signs and pledges of protection. But they would not understand them and use them unless they believed themselves ready at each moment to fall. They would not trust God's faithfulness unless they distrusted their own. Every one will see that St. Paul strikes not merely at the confidence and self-conceit of the Corinthians, but at that particular tendency of theirs to forget that their privileges belonged to them as members of a society, the tendency to glorify their individual knowledge and saintship. Each Jew who tempted Christ tempted him by forgetting his calling as a Jew, and by presuming upon his own power or upon God's favor to him. Each Corinthian who tempted Christ would do so precisely from the same forgetfulness, from the same eagerness to claim liberties and privileges for himself. The Jew's great temptation in the wilderness and in the holy land was idolatry. That summed up and expressed all his temptations. And were the Corinthians free from this danger? Were they not obviously exposed to it? And was not

the danger greatest when they thought they were safe, when they believed that all the habits which had once clung to them were at an immeasurable distance from them?

Thus the particular question about eating things offered to idols is again suggested to us by the Apostle's discourse which had been so large and general. He has not forgotten the topic from which he started, though we may. And now there comes out in connection with it—in still closer and more intimate connection with all he has been saying of the partial, dividing, self-exalting tendencies of his disciples—the communion of Christ's body and blood.

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of the Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of the Christ? Because there is one bread, we the many are one body; for we all are partakers of that one bread. Look at Israel after the flesh. Are not those who eat the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What do I then say? That a thing offered to an idol is any thing, or that an idol is any thing? No! But that the things that they sacrifice they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not wish you to have communion with the demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons. You cannot communicate at the table of the Lord, and at the table of demons."

Till now he has not fully answered the objection that the thing offered to idols is nothing, and the idol is nothing. He has detected the state of mind in which the objection originated; he has pointed out the distinction between false liberty and the true. Here he touches deeper ground. All worship is communion. You are brought into communion with the eternal God the Father. In the body and blood of Christ you are united to Him and united to each other. The participation of that body and blood signifies that you are taken out of subjection to lower beings, into direct intercourse with the Lord of all. The bread and wine, which are to you what the manna and water were to the Jews, intimate that you have been brought into a higher fellowship than theirs through your ascended Lord. Now all these

things that are offered to idols express the communion of men with beings of a lower order, subjection to mere powers of nature. This is a denial of your privilege—an abdication of the high state which has been given you.

I do not assume, with our translators, that by demons in this place the Apostle means devils. I fully admit that much of Greek, as well as of Roman worship—why should I except Jewish?—was becoming, in the strictest sense, devil-worship, the worship of malevolent beings, of natures opposed to the Divine nature. But I conceive we should weaken, not strengthen, this passage if we imputed that meaning to it. St. Paul's contrast is evidently between the lower divided powers to whom men were doing homage, the rulers of different portions of nature, and the one eternal God, the Father of Spirits. The incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension of Christ, had delivered them from these powers, had raised them to the highest glory men could obtain. What a notion of liberty to throw all this aside that they might prove they were not narrow Judaizers!

This doctrine of communion appeared to St. Paul to be so implied in the very existence of the Church, that he propounds it to the Corinthians as if it were familiar to them, one which they ought certainly to know. But we are not therefore to conclude either that it was not a truth of which they were displaying continual ignorance, or that it was not one of the deepest of all truths. This whole epistle is a lesson in commonplaces. The Corinthians did not like commonplaces. They wanted novelties. They liked to discuss points of opinion, the peculiarities which separated one teacher and school from another. This was their frivolity; this made them incapable of looking at the facts of their own existence; this prevented them from entering into those principles which connect the being of man with the being of God. When St. Paul announces these, he inevitably uses phrases which denote a kind of surprise that they should not be aware of that which was so near to them, and which so intimately concerned them. And the minds of the readers would, in a certain degree, respond to this feeling of his. They would

start as if a discovery was made to them of something very awful which they had always known, and yet which flashed upon them with a sense of novelty, such as may sometimes come to a person in watching a sunset or a familiar landscape. "The bread which we eat, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" "Why, certainly. We have always given it that name. And that name meant something, meant a reality, meant what it says! It can actually be applied to a special question, to one of our favorite topics of dispute. It can throw a light upon that, giving it an importance which it never had before, yet making it and making us look so petty and dwarfish. The reason for not eating things offered to idols is, that we are actually taken into fellowship with the Lord God of heaven and earth, actually redeemed out of idol and demon-worship for His service; this is involved in our very position as members of a church, expressed in the feast which denotes that we belong to it. Here is the reason for flying from any contact with that which may draw us back into the earthly slavery from which we have escaped. Here, at the same time, is the full justification of that liberty of using all God's creatures which Paul had asserted for us, and of which we thought he was going again to deprive us. Whatever I find in the market-place I may eat, asking no questions, for it is God's good creature; and the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof. Whatever is pointed out to me as offered to idols I am not to eat; for the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; and nothing can lawfully be taken from Him and devoted to another. And this I am to do, even though my own conscience may testify that I am offering that thing to God, and not to an idol. For I am not alone in the world. I am the member of a Church. I cannot think only of myself. I must think of every man who belongs to that Church, of every Jew and Gentile who lies without it. If I am the means of corrupting their consciences I am bearing false witness to them: I am misunderstanding and outraging the state into which God has brought me."

CHAPTER XI.

This chapter opens with a commendation of the Corinthians for their remembrance of St. Paul's traditions. It would seem as if the Church, generally, had enforced a rule against which certain members of it, especially certain women, had protested. Though these women may not have been numerous, they displayed a tendency which was exhibiting itself in different forms throughout the society. Why may we not eat things offered to idols? was the form of the cry for spiritual independence which affected the name of freedom. There were others as obvious. Why should not a woman be a prophetess just as much as a man? Why should she not claim to be equal with the man? Who could control the operations of the Spirit of God? Who could dare to say to a female "Thou must be silent," when she believed an inner power was urging her to speak?

Very plausible arguments, very pious, very spiritual. The Corinthian women were quick in acting upon them. What was natural and customary and decorous for ordinary people, was just what they, inspired sisters carried away by a divine afflatus, avoided. And yet with all their inspiration, they fell into the imitation of the models with which they had been most familiar. They had seen the priestesses of Aphrodite with uncovered heads and dishevelled locks; they knew what were the ordinary symptoms of the Pythian furor. These they adapted to Christian usage, and naturalized in Christian assemblies. Would St. Paul, a mere man, dare to control such manifestations? Yes, he is bold enough to do that. Let the sisters of the free spirit call him what names they please, he tells them plainly that they are violating the first maxims and principles of Christian society. For the head of the woman is the man, even as the head of the man is Christ, even as the head of Christ is God. The Church is first of all an order, a divine, eternal order, grounded on the revelation of Christ as the head of man. Whatever interferes

with that principle is antichristian, and is simply to be put down. But St. Paul has a further lesson for these highflown prophetesses. He tells them plainly that they are to obey Nature. There is a customary order about the behavior of women which their consciences in ordinary cases tell them is right. That and no other is to be their behavior in the Church, in the spiritual assembly. The way that men and women dress their hair in other places is the way in which they are to dress their hair there. For the Church of God does not supersede any natural law or maxim, not even if it is a local law belonging to the habits and customs of a particular race, but establishes it upon its deepest ground.

This, it seems to me, is the general sense of this passage. If I am asked for the particular sense of that sentence in it which speaks of the woman covering her head because of the angels, I may not be able to answer. I fancy I can discern a meaning in it. But if I tried to put it into words I should probably blunder, and might interfere with a better interpretation which has suggested itself to some one else. I am chiefly anxious, therefore, that the mysteriousness of that clause should not hinder any one from observing the thoroughly human and, if I might say so, anti-mystical, character of the context. At the same time I would not be misunderstood as denying that it also is mystical in the sense which is sometimes given to that word. When St. Paul appeals to nature's teaching, he does not contradict all that he had said before about the spiritual economy of the Church. That economy according to him vindicates, interprets, sanctifies what might else pass for mere notions and conventions, the creatures of men's fancy. The principle that the man is the head of the woman had been recognized in all times. It had been liable to great perversions. These had provoked protests and reactions. But it had given birth to a great many customs and practices which had become involved with the very existence of society. The truth that Christ is the head of every man came in to justify that imperfect belief of human beings, to remove the tyrannies to which it had given birth, to make any rude

transgression of even the secondary and variable inferences from it a moral offence. I suppose the relation between the women and the angels is in some way involved in that fundamental principle; I suppose it implies such an intercourse between the visible and invisible world as we do not commonly recognize, and as we could not safely recognize unless our belief in Christ's relation to us were more distinct and serious than it is wont to be. But I hope no one will lose himself in speculations about this question till he has got into his heart that portion of the Apostle's words which is intended as a correction for spiritual ambition and self-conceit.

St. Paul had expressed his pleasure that the Corinthians generally remembered the traditions he had given them on this subject. He now expresses displeasure that they had entirely departed from the lessons he had received and given to them respecting the Lord's Supper. The error of which they were guilty was strikingly characteristic of their state of mind, as it has discovered itself in previous chapters. They could not understand a common feast. Each one brought his own supper; it was reduced to a meal for the satisfaction or gratification of the bodily appetite. The heresies and schisms of the Church were the parents of this habit, and were of course kept alive by it. I know nothing more instructive than St. Paul's method of dealing with this offence. Gross as the violation of decency and reverence was in the eating and the drunkenness, he does not let them suppose that it is merely an excess he is finding fault with. A great principle had been outraged—one in which the very nature of the Church was involved. He speaks first of the rule or order he had laid down. This the Corinthians had altered from carelessness or self-will. But next he makes them see that no ordinance—certainly not such an ordinance—in a Church can be merely an ordinance. There must be a profound significance in it, or it would be empty formalism to observe it. That same selfish, self-willed habit which made them innovate on the sign, made them incapable of apprehending the thing signified. They did not discern the Lord's body. They set up

distinctions of rich and poor, of those who had abundance and those who had need. They shamed the Church of God, the home of both. Not discerning the Lord's body, is evidently the root of all these errors. The incapacity of perceiving that they were the members of his body, that there was one life for them all, one communion in which all were sharers—this was the dreadful loss and judgment which they incurred. There could be no greater. It was the loss of the blessings which they had won when they gave up their divided idolatrous worship and confessed the one Lord and one Father. Less judgments, flowing from their own ill-doings, weakness, feebleness of body, torpor of body and mind, they should look upon as merciful punishments, warning to them that God was wakening them up to judge themselves—to exercise their spiritual energies which he had given them, and which would enable them to discern Christ as the root of their own life and of the life of all their brethren.

CHAPTERS XII. XIII. XIV.

And thus the way is prepared for the wonderful passages which follow,—those which contain the very essence of the epistle—which make the ignorance and strife of the Corinthians instruments of bringing forth the revelation of the principle on which the whole Church and on which human society is founded. He does not wish them, he says, to be ignorant περὶ τῶν πνευματικῶν an expression (touching the spiritual) which we are hardly justified in limiting by the term "gifts:" especially if by that term we understand merely the powers which were bestowed upon the Church in that day or in any subsequent one. No doubt he undertakes to explain the nature and purpose of these powers, and to connect them with the nature and purpose of the Church itself. But he begins earlier. While they were Gentiles, unacquainted with the Gospel, they were still under a spiritual influence. They were not mere creatures of sense. They had the instinct and necessity of worship. But they were drawn after

dumb idols. Their instincts of worship were turned towards dead things. *Wherefore* he gives them to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus Anathema, or that no one can call Him Lord but by the Holy Ghost. Why "*wherefore?*" What has the second proposition to do with the first? *This* I apprehend. The impulse of the Corinthians was to believe in a Spirit, and to glorify themselves for possessing it. Spiritual powers they reverenced. The new capacity of speaking with tongues was as great an excuse for intellectual pride as any of the gifts which they were conscious of before they were converted had been. St. Paul wishes them to understand first of all, *what* Spirit had taken hold of them, whither he was leading them. Their secret thought was that He was come to make them independent, to set them above law and order—the habit of mind, which as I said before, displayed itself in the women being just as really that of the men. He tells them that the Spirit of God is leading them to confess a *Lord*, to bow down their spirits to a government, and to confess Jesus the crucified to be the Person who is exercising that government. Supposing then they put Him aside and substitute any mere spiritual power and influence in this place, supposing they claim that kind of liberty which consists in saying what they please and doing what they like, they are *not* speaking by the spirit of God; and supposing they confess Jesus to be the Lord of all their inmost thoughts and speech, that is the sign and token that they are submitting to the true Spirit. Some might actually have used the words ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς, declaring in a moment of supposed divine ecstasy that the mere acknowledgment of Jesus was a very low kind of Christianity, from which those who had attained to spiritual intuitions were emancipated. One could easily suspect this from what we know of the Everlasting Gospel in the 13th century and of similar movements in different times of the Church. But if the words were uttered by a few, the principle pervaded the hearts of a great many, and nothing, I suspect, may have startled many members of the Church more than to be told that the highest operation of the Spirit was to teach them of

the dominion of Jesus over them. Could not all say that they had believed that, ever since they were baptized? Might not they hope now for some higher illumination? No! it was just this truth which they had so imperfectly understood. This was what they wanted that they might be cured of their strifes; this that they might be a Church, a spiritual body. For as we have seen all along, their sense of being high-souled, highly-exalted men interfered altogether with their feeling that they belonged to a body, and therefore—this has been St. Paul's doctrine throughout—with their spirituality. The psychical man may boast of that which belongs to him as an individual, that which distinguishes him from others, in power or saintship, intellectually or morally—the spiritual man must seek only that which is common, that which he and his brother can have as their joint inheritance.

Here, then, is *the* principle of the chapter as of the Epistle, "You must be a body in order to know what the Spirit is, in order to receive any benefit from his operations. You must have a Spirit in order that you may be a body, not a mere set of *disjecta membra*. The gifts which one had and another had not, had been mistaken for *the* gift; the living Spirit from whom they came. He begins therefore with laying down the doctrine that these distinctions imply the same Spirit. There were again different offices, each of which had been an excuse for some class difference, some exaltation of one against another. Each of these are declared to be ministries; but they are not referred to the Inspirer, but to the *Lord*, of whom He testifies. Finally, there are difference of energies. It is not enough for a man, or for a Church, to talk of gifts, or even occupations and services. It must refer all to a divine Energizer. It must believe that God is making gifts, persons, ministries, alive, and not dead, that He is reviving and receiving that Spirit which He has Himself bestowed. Thus we have the great theological mystery set forth as the source of the great human mystery—God the ground of all, Christ the Lord of man, the Spirit of the Father and the Son, the perpetual fellow-worker with men.

This principle being laid down, he goes on to say that the manifestation of this power in each man, the particular talent or energy which he exhibits, is not the result of accident, but of a law. It is *πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον*, with a view to the common benefit. Through the Spirit he says comes the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, the working of powers or miracles, distinctions of tongues, interpretation of tongues. The author of these, the gifts which require patient cultivation, which grow by exercise, just as much as any which manifest themselves suddenly, he says, is the Spirit; the end of them the good of the society. In fact, there is no power described by the Apostle which is merely marvellous in the vulgar sense of the word; none which might not be divested of all marvel, and exercised, as we should say, professionally. The object of the Apostle is clearly not to explain the particular phenomena of his own age, but to show how those phenomena illustrate the constitution of the Church and of humanity.

Fully to appreciate the description which follows, and to recover the impression of which familiarity deprives us, we should compare it with the view of society which is given in the *Leviathan* of Hobbes. That clear-sighted man perceived at once the truth of St. Paul's image. He saw that the body and the members must be the type of that distinctness and that unity which are implied in a polity. The *body* politic, he saw, was no idle or fantastic expression. But then he regards the body as natural; society as wholly artificial. It was manufactured, as nearly as might be, with many awkward deviations, after the pattern which nature furnishes. One may say that the whole difference between the world's order—of which Hobbes exhibits the true and complete representation, and the Christian order which is developed by the Apostle, lies in this difference. And it is very important that we should press this observation upon ourselves and upon others. We are apt to think that St. Paul is presenting to us the image of a peculiarly beautiful and seraphic social condition. How glorious, we say to ourselves, the time when the foot shall not say to the hand, I have no need of thee, when,

if one member suffers, all the members shall suffer! Very glorious assuredly the time when people shall understand what their condition is, and shall not struggle against it. That is as seraphical a vision as one can have. But St. Paul tells that the foot *cannot* now, or at any time, dispense with the hand; that if one member suffer, all the members *must* suffer here and always. We cannot make our separate human body otherwise than God has made it; it is under a law—the one which experience every day makes known to us. We cannot make the whole human body otherwise than God has made it; and if the revelation of Christ is not an imposture, this is the constitution of that body. The particular Church of Corinth, with its rivalries, heresies, questions about idol-sacrificing, abuses of the Communion, exaltation of gifts, through all these contradictions, is taught what its own law and order is; we are to learn ours from it. Nothing can be so perverse as to suppose that we are reading of some celestial paradisaical people, while St. Paul is pointing out at every turn their ignorance and wilfulness. We must say plainly that this state was theirs because it is also ours, or that St. Paul was not a true teacher of them or of us.

The first object of the 12th chapter is certainly to explain the law under which the whole society existed; the second to explain how the gifts and offices of the particular members of the society were determined by that law and illustrated it. Every thing depends upon the observance of this method. If the spiritual gifts and graces of individuals are thought of *first*, if the body is supposed to be made up of a certain set of limbs which had been previously endowed with a separate life, the Christian society acquires as artificial a character as the Hobbes society; his idea, and not St. Paul's, is the explanation of a Church. Christ in that case becomes just what the Corinthians considered Him, the king or leader whom they had chosen in preference to some other, not *the* corner-stone which can alone bind living and spiritual beings together. I drop unawares into St. Peter's illustration, one which he derived from the Old Testament. So closely are his and St. Paul's connected, so admirably is each

adapted to some side or portion of human life, that one inevitably suggests the other. The human body, however, is the great illustration of all to which every other must be referred and by which it must be tested. The stones of the temple become "living" stones by a kind of violence before they can represent the members of a human society. The members of a body must *necessarily* be considered as alive; and their life necessarily implies unity. Only in the scattered distracted condition in which Ezekiel saw them in his vision, can we conceive of them as utterly dead; no one has perished in itself till it has lost that which unites it with the rest. One does not know how to state these simple propositions simply enough. The least effort to make them abstract weakens them. We stumble back into St. Paul's phraseology when we have quitted it, as the only full explanation of our own explanations. And yet one perceives at each moment how we have been forgetting this truth, not in daily practice only, but in our most elaborate ecclesiastical and theological theories. Each one of them contrives by some ingenious sophism or other to evade the straightforward question, "Because the hand or the eye or the foot says, I am not of the body, *is* it not of the body?" Each one tries to make out that hand, eye, or foot, has a right to say it is not of the body, nay, that it has no right to say it is, that it ought to be modest and diffident before it claims such an honor. Each eye is to look hard that it may try to find out whether there is no salvation for itself; each hand is to stretch itself out that it may catch at this salvation or at some shadow of it; each foot is to try if it cannot move on by itself in the way to salvation. And the eye is blind and the hand is withered and the foot is paralyzed, because it is urged to a vain and impossible experiment, because it is not told of its relation to Him in whom the whole body is fitly joined together, and who supplies the nourishment to each joint. And so each particular gift is wonderfully over-valued, and is made an excuse for extravagant idolatry, while yet no gift serves its proper purpose, while none has the freedom and strength which it would derive from the support and fellowship of the

rest, while none awakens the thankfulness which is due to the Almighty Giver.

The enumeration of gifts by the Apostle at the conclusion of this chapter has, I suppose, puzzled many readers; human beings are so strangely mixed up with their endowments. "God hath set certain in the Church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then powers (or miracles), then gifts of healing, helps, governments, varieties of tongues." But this order is intelligible when one considers the sentence immediately preceding, and the purpose of the whole chapter. Apostles, prophets, teachers, as far as their offices are concerned, are merely ministerial to the whole body in the same sense as gifts of speaking or of healing are. The human treasure is put in the highest place. A man is a greater gift to the Church than all which he does. Paul is more than any words which Paul is able to speak or any wonders he is able to enact. Nevertheless the man is as much placed in the Church, is as much bestowed upon it, as the energies which are wrought by his means. And the man and the gifts alike stand in a certain fixed relation. There is nothing fortuitous in the arrangements of this society. The teacher is subordinate to the prophet, the prophet to the apostle. All those influences which may strike some as overpowering inspirations that they cannot control, are really subject to them. They are spiritual gifts, and therefore they belong to an order. That which is unspiritual, fleshly, idolatrous, is always trying to be strange and startling. I scarcely need point out how much the errors of the Corinthians demanded the assertion of this principle, or how much it is demanded by ourselves. It would seem as if we had begun to think that every thing which is spiritual must be irregular, fortuitous, anomalous. When once we are brought to live habitually in the opposite faith, the trade of the wonderment-maker will be obsolete and hopeless; all will know the worth of his wares, and will treat them with the scorn which they deserve. That time will not come till we desire earnestly the best gifts, till we count all arts of healing, all capacities of government, as divine trusts, the most divine when they

are most regularly and scientifically exercised; until we enter upon that more excellent way which the Apostle after this exhibition of the worth of gifts points out to us.

CHAPTER XIII.

It is almost needless to observe that this chapter cannot be separated from the last. The subordination of gifts to the divine principle which binds the whole Church together,—to *the* gift of God,—is the subject of it. This is the answer to the argument which Socinus deduced from it against the personality of the Holy Spirit: "The Apostle can indulge in a long personification of charity; why must he or our Lord mean more when they attribute acts, qualities, sympathies, to the Comforter or the Spirit of truth?" I admit that if there is a prosopopæia in one case, there may be in the other. But there really is in neither. The Apostle speaks of charity suffering long and being kind, because he cannot separate charity from Him who is Charity. He regards Love as the essence of God, not as His attribute. And if you say, "Does he mean then by Charity in this chapter divine Charity, and not human?" I answer, he must mean one if he means the other. The only charity which fully answers to this description is the charity of God Himself. Separate man from God, and it remains wholly and incommunicably in Him. it is a contradiction to suppose charity incommunicable. Its nature implies a desire for fellowship and participation. The very words which represent charity here represent it in exercise, yes, and in exercise towards those who are resisting it, towards those who are unworthy of it. If you must have the belief of a charity—and I know you must—which is absolute and original, not merely in relation to any creature, and yet which seeks for such a relation, longs for it, establishes it, then believe in a Father. If you must believe in love manifesting itself—and I know you must—meeting the disobedient and rebellious creature, embracing it, adopting it, then believe in an only-begotten Son.

If you must—and I know you must—speak of that love as not presented to the creature only but as working in it, then believe in the Holy Spirit of Love. And so you have the charity of this chapter presented in its fulness and all-sufficiency, and yet with every possible allowance for the imperfect and insufficient results which it produces when it is brought into connection and conflict with a will, or a number of wills, not in submission to it. This Charity is still the ground of all unity to the Church. The acknowledgment of it as working in the Church, as working upon ourselves, is that superlative or more excellent way by which man rises into a belief in God and into communion with Him. It appertains to the eternal and to the universal; while gifts and powers belong to the temporal; while even prophecies belong to a partial region. They may be of yesterday or to-day; they may indicate a period of partial illumination, of childlike apprehension. But there is that which is abiding and eternal. Faith is so, for it attaches itself to the eternal God; Hope is so, for it looks to the full revelation of the Eternal God; Love is so in the highest sense of all, because God Himself, the object of Faith and Hope, is Charity.

CHAPTER XIV.

We have heard of that which is above all gifts, and also of that which gives a value to all gifts, and enables us to ascertain their relative importance. Speaking with tongues had seemed to the Corinthians the most precious of all powers, because the outward exhibitions of it were the most surprising; preaching (or prophesying) the most insignificant, as being the most commonplace. St. Paul necessarily reverses the order. If Love is the end, that which conduces to the good of the whole body must be better than that which is confined to the individual. In order to maintain this distinction, it is necessary for him to explain both the nature and purpose of the gift of tongues. His explanation is altogether inconsistent with many of the notions which have

been current among us. We are often told that this gift was specially convenient, and even necessary for those who had to preach the Gospel in different countries. No hint is given of the kind in the New Testament. In this, the classical passage on the subject, our translators have been so much puzzled how to reconcile the Apostle's language with their own previous conception, that they have very unrighteously thrust in the word "unknown" in order to make him more intelligible. He seems to tell us that the gift of tongues was not primarily an intellectual gift, that it was the sign of a communication between God's Spirit and that spirit of man in us to which he had alluded in a former passage; that it was therefore the witness of the divinest Christian mystery, of that union of man with God which was implied in the acts of Christ, and made effectual by those acts, of that union of man with man which was implied and realized in the existence of a Church. It was the main error, as we have seen, of the Corinthians, that they confounded this spirit of man with individual soul, glorifying separate powers and qualities at the expense of that which was universal. Here was the climax of their falsehood. This gift of tongues itself was made a pretext for their individualizing tendencies. They exulted in the divine communication of words because no one could understand them. They liked to think that something was given to one here and there in the Church, with which the rest had nothing to do. It is this tendency which St. Paul is combating here. He does not disparage that which had been the great and significant witness that the Church had been begun upon earth, that there was a real fellowship between earth and heaven. But with his usual courage, he sets at nought even that sign when he sees that its meaning has been wholly subverted. He tells them that they are to desire to prophesy because that is useful, and that they are "not to forbid to speak with tongues." Not to forbid to speak with tongues! What a strange and audacious sentence. How could they forbid that which was the effect of a divine inspiration? This is the subject which he especially considers in the latter part of the chapter. The high-flown Corinthians were

far above all vulgar thoughts of usefulness. They were equally indifferent to so vulgar a thing as Order. St. Paul, the inspired Apostle, will have usefulness and order, because he is certain that the Spirit is a Spirit of order, and that all manifestations of the Spirit are given to profit withal. Those inspirations must be undervalued which are not beneficial to the body; those must be suppressed, and can be suppressed, which interfere with its quietness and order. If any question his decision on this point, he does not reason with them; he simply puts them down; "What, came the word of God out from you? Or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant."

There is a passage in this chapter which has caused some perplexity. In one sentence Paul seems to affirm that the gift of tongues is not for them that believe, but for them that believe not; the opposite being the case with prophesying or preaching. Presently after he seems to say that preaching or prophesying will be specially useful to any unbeliever who comes into their congregations, whereas, if such a person hears them speaking with tongues, he will only suppose they are mad. The difficulty arises, I think, from a misunderstanding of the first proposition. The gift of tongues was beneficial to *themselves* while they believed not; that is to say, it was the token to them of a spiritual communication which before they had not supposed to be possible. Afterwards, when they had believed in the presence of a Spirit, when they had perceived that it was implied in all their fellowship and all their worship, this sign was of little worth. To crave for it was a proof that they had not believed that which it imported. If this is the force of that assertion it certainly is not the least at variance with the other, which is so evidently reasonable, and must have been confirmed by the experience of the whole Christian Church.

CHAPTER XV.

The connection between this chapter and those which precede it, is not at once obvious. But we shall soon detect it if we consider the question which gives rise to the discussion. "How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" Some among them said there was no resurrection of the dead, for the same reason that some among them said they were of Paul or of Apollos, that some among them exalted their own wisdom, that some of them asserted their right to eat things offered to idols, and in all respects to do what they liked, that some of them wished women to speak in the churches, that some treated the Communion as an ordinary feast, that some valued gifts which glorified them above gifts which were useful to the Church. These notions of some expressed that which was the failing of all, the inclination to value the individual above the body, tongues and prophecies above charity. To deny a bodily resurrection, to maintain that the only resurrection was the rising to a higher spiritual state, was a natural consequence or accompaniment of such notions and feelings. The old Greek reverence for the soul, and contempt of the body, was reviving under the shadow of Christian ordinances, and fashioning Christian doctrines into conformity with itself. Whatever was common and human was *therefore* despicable; whatever was peculiar and distinguishing was *therefore* glorious. The body was the case of death from which the winged soul, according to the doctrine of older philosophers, was to emerge in the hour of dissolution. The Christians could antedate the period of deliverance; the spirit was *already* winged, *already* regenerate. They *were* buried with Christ by baptism into death; they *were* risen by faith in the operation of God who had raised Him from the dead. They looked back upon that to which their ancestors looked forward; they could place the superiority of the new doctrine upon that ground. But while they did so, they were, in fact, adhering to

the psychical principle of the old heathenism, and parting with the hope for the future which heathenism, however faintly, had authorized.

St. Paul, in pursuance of the method which he had always prescribed to himself, begins with them again from the beginning. Those who are full of conceit of their manhood must be treated as babes, and fed with milk. He declares to them the Gospel which he had preached to them; the simple common Gospel that Christ had died for their sins and risen again the third day. He dwells distinctly on these events, as events, apart from the meaning which he may afterwards discover in them. He insists that they were in accordance with the scriptures. The written word of God demanded them. They were no parts of a philosophical or theological theory. And this, he says, was his good news. He had nothing better to tell them than that the Son of God and the Son of Man had gone into death and risen out of death. Here was their salvation out of sin and death if they believed that He had done this, and done it for them. If no such acts had been accomplished, no such victories had been won, they were still in their old slavery; they had not been redeemed at all.

Plain and historical enough surely. St. Paul would seem to be speaking of mere transactions external to the man to whom they are proclaimed and who believes them. But I am afraid we cannot acquit him of mysticism, if a belief in Christ as the root and ground of humanity is mysticism, so quickly. The whole of the argument which follows rests upon this mystical ground, and is good for nothing if it be taken from him. If we do not rise, then Christ is not risen, and then our preaching is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Daring assertion! Christ *cannot* have risen if we are not to rise! For all that He is the Son of God, St. Paul affirms this. Either He did not rise from the dead, or, in that rising, He exhibited the law of the race with which He was united. If He was not the firstborn among many brethren it was a lie that He had left the grave at all. Not one part of the message He had delivered, but the whole of it

was a delusion. It was not the resurrection of the body which was gone. That resurrection of the soul which they vaunted of was just as imaginary.

And then those that have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. The whole past world is nothing but one dark horrible vision of human souls born into a world of sorrow, enduring it for threescore years and ten, and then dying out of it. If in this life only, he adds boldly, we have hope in Christ, we are more wretched than any men; for all have had dreams of another life, of heroes who have escaped the prison-house and entered into a higher state, even of a hero or champion who might bring them into one. The privilege of exalted Christians, it would seem, is *not* to have this hope. Christ has died and risen that they may be content with the threescore years and ten, and be content that mankind should perish if they can obtain a temporary felicity. That St. Paul meant *this*, and not that he was more miserable in this life than Festus, or Berenice, or Agrippa, whom he wished to be both almost and altogether such as he was, except his bonds, I think there can be no doubt. He goes on with those memorable words: "But now is Christ raised out of the dead, the first-fruits of those that are asleep. For since through man death, through man also resurrection of the dead. For as in the Adam all die, so also in the Christ all shall be made alive." We have here an assertion as broad as that which we found in the 5th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and exactly corresponding to it. There it was said, that "as through one transgression, or the transgression of one—unto all men—unto condemnation, so also, through one just act, (or the just act of one)—unto all men—unto justification of life." There is no limitation in either case; there can be none, unless the whole contrast which the passage brings out is lost. The law of death for the race is said to be manifested in Adam, the law of life for the race in the Christ. The Resurrection has proved the law of life to be stronger than the law of death. The Resurrection has not been to confirm the hopes of a few believers; not to assure those who came in after days how much better their condition is than that of their fathers.

He is the first-fruits of those that have *slept*. All the men of the past world are concerned in his victory. It is a victory over their tyrant. It breaks their chains. Theologians have tried hard to make this free gospel to humanity accord with their narrow conception of its present state and future destiny. But the words are too strong for them. In trying to make a salvation for themselves they exclude themselves; they leave no foundation upon which they can stand when they have to fight, not with a school-death, but an actual death.

But every man, St. Paul says, is to rise in his own order, Christ the first-fruits, afterwards *οἱ τοῦ* in his presence *Χριστοῦ ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ, αὐτοῦ*. I quote the words *those who are of Christ*, because it seems to me that our translators have committed two faults in rendering them, which though not apparently very important, and perhaps difficult to avoid, have proved serious hinderances to the Christian student. The words, "They that are Christ's," have been taken to mean faithful or godly people who belong to Christ, so distinguished from the unfaithful or ungodly who are none of His. Of course this sense may be in words, but no one would at once deduce it from the Greek. Christ first; then His attendants, companions, or (to follow the teaching of the previous chapters) the members of His body. Who those are must be ascertained by considerations independent of this verse; that can by itself exclude none. The other error is a far more extensive one, and affects numberless passages besides this. Ought *παρουσία ever* to be rendered "coming?" Does not the word "appearing" or "presence" convey the sense much more nearly? Is there any one instance of its use to which those renderings would not be suitable? is there any one which is not somewhat perverted and darkened by mixing with it the idea of locomotion?

I wish my readers carefully to examine this question for themselves. I have not much doubt about the result. But I will speak of the passage before us. If we adopt the rendering of our version, Christ is said to be the first-fruits of an harvest. And yet he is said to have risen ages before any one ear or grain

is gathered in. All who were then dead or to die for generations after would at some indefinitely distant day rise out of graves in which they had seen the grossest corruption, in accordance with the precedent, and in obedience to the law, which He established, who saw no corruption. If the other meaning is taken, Christ's appearance or manifestation is the resurrection and deliverance of man out of his deathly Adam conditions. The true Lord of his life, the source of all that has been living in his spirit and body, awakens and renovates him. He comes into that true state which all through his life on earth he has been conscious of, though it has been choked and hidden by so many perverse accidents that he could very imperfectly realize it. I need hardly say that such a view of Christ's παρουσία (presence) to each man does not interfere with the belief of that gathering together of all men in Him, which the Apostle refers to elsewhere. One truth sustains the other. I do not want people to think less of a general appearing of Christ. I wish them to see how general, how universal the effect of His appearing must be. If we look upon Him as the one living Head and Root of humanity, we cannot suppose any unity or gathering together of the elements whereof humanity consists except in Him. Life involves union, as Death is only another name for dispersion. If Christ's Incarnation and Death and Resurrection and Ascension, and His after judgments on Jersusalem, declared Him to be the Man, the Centre of Hummanity, then it is surely consistent that ever after He should be appearing or declaring Himself in this character; that the death of every individual, as much as the judgment of every nation, should be such an appearance or declaration; and that there should be a final and more perfect appearing which should gather up the threads of the history of the universe, and satisfy all the purposes of its Creator.

"And then," says St. Paul, "the end," τὸ τέλος, the point to which all Christ's acts have been tending, the accomplishment of the design which has been implied in them all. It is not, I conceive, necessary to think merely of that final gathering which is, as I said before, assumed in St. Paul's words, when we hear

of this τέλος. In the history of each period of the world, in the history of each man, we may believe that a purpose is carried out, a divine intention realized—one that is expressed by the words, "The Son who has been carrying on the long battle in that period—with that man—and beneath whose feet at last his enemies have been put, then presents the fruit of His victory to the Father, subjects Himself to Him who put all things under Him, so that God is all in all." The vision of a kingdom of God, an eternal kingdom, for which the kingdom of Christ is a preparation,—the kingdom where principles are in conflict, where the world and the flesh and the devil are still contending for the prize of man and of the earth, and often appear to be contending successfully—is one which comes out very clearly in certain passages of St. Paul's writings; but for the fulness of which we must turn to the writings of the beloved disciple If any one supposes that that kingdom is one in which the Son will disappear, lost in the brightness of the Eternal Glory, St. John will be the best protector from so gloomy an anticipation. The Son revealing the Father, the Father revealing the Son; the perpetual strife of opposite truths reconciled in the perfect Unity of the Spirit; this is that great τέλος, that satisfying vision, to which those that have suffered with Christ may hope to awake, not surely to one where He who has been their only strength in all their warfare is no longer distinctly and personally present.

Death, says St. Paul, is the last enemy that is destroyed or put down. *Is* put down, or is *to be* put down? The next sentence, which has caused so much trouble to interpreters, contains, I think, the answer. "Why are they then baptized for the dead?" Whether our translators found the exact equivalent to ὑπὲρ or not, I cannot believe they were very far wrong. Every explanation of the passage that has been derived from supposed usages in the Church,—usages probably antedated to serve the convenience of the commentators,—itself requires an explanation from some principle. The words in the 6th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans must account for the practice, if it existed; they account for St. Paul's language here, if it did not exist.

The Christians were baptized for the dead. Baptism was a witness that they were planted in the likeness of Christ's death, and should be of His resurrection. It declared them to be dead with Christ, to carry about death with them through all their pilgrimage; but a death which was no longer solitary, individualizing, antihuman. It was a human death, a common death, the death of Christ, which united them to each other, not cut them off from each other. And it was a death which had been overcome. Not only the promise of a Resurrection, but the fact of a Resurrection, was contained in the baptism. It spoke of death trampled upon already as well as of death to be trampled on hereafter, in the case of each person who put on Christ. According to St. Paul's general argument, if it imported either it must import the other. And then what a mockery was baptism for all who adopted the Corinthians' notion of a *merely* spiritual and past resurrection!

And if that notion is true, he goes on, "why are we also in peril every hour?" He touches here upon a very grave and fertile question in ethics, the importance of which later ages have fully appreciated. Apparently he decides it for the Bossuet school, against the Fenelon. The former could easily extract from his words the moral, "We want the promise of rewards to enable us to bear up against the world's opposition; the mere love of God is not of itself sufficient. If we were left to that, the motives to 'eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,' would be irresistible." The conclusion, I think, is one-sided and hasty, though not without a useful admonition to the mere mystical dreamer, who turns his faith in the love of God into an excuse for acquiescence with all which contradicts that Love on earth. How could you trust it, if you supposed it was working out no result, was triumphing over no enemies, was finding miseries and curses and leaving them? Eating and drinking is a refuge, the only one to be found, from the dreariness of such a faith. But it was not the thought of a selfish prize which kept the Apostle from giving the reins to his appetites. He was too practical and honest not to prefer a present gratification to the mere dream of a reversionary one. The thought that God would not disappoint

those who believed in Him, that He would prove Himself mightier than sin and death and hell, made him ready to fight with beasts or men at Ephesus, and to die daily,—as he swore by that gladness and triumph which he had, and which they might share with him in Christ their common Lord, that he did. And to this hope and confidence he called them to awake. They were substituting theories about the resurrection, refinements which could stand the shock of no trial, for trust in God and the knowledge of Him. They were encouraging each other in these bad habits. They were fostered by their sects and clubs. Let them seek that higher blessing which it was a shame for members of a Church to want.

"But some one will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what kind of body do they come? Fool! that which *thou* sowest is not quickened except it die. And what thou sowest is not the body that is to become, but the naked grain, it may chance of wheat or of some of the other grains. But *God* giveth it a body as He will, and to each seed its own proper body."

The question of the doubter is here twofold. What is the manner of resurrection? And what kind of body can those have who seem to have cast aside what has been called body here? Both questions were precisely such as would have occurred to Greeks who had heard that the body, in the judgment of the philosopher, was merely a carcase, the prison-house of a nobler principle, and that he looked for an absorption of the particular life into some general essence. Yet St. Paul treats them with unusual contempt. He wishes the Corinthians to feel how little earnest reflection upon facts was implied in their fine speculations. If they would but consider quietly for a few moments the things with which they were most familiar, how much they might learn which the wisest doctor could not tell them. They expect a resurrection for the seed which they put into the ground. They look for it to come up some day, do they not? They expect the seed of wheat to bring forth wheat, of rye to bring forth rye. But it lies in the ground; it dies. And, when it comes up again, is it the least like that which was deposited? Yet it is

identical with that. They have no doubt about it. God has given the seed a body—a new body—and yet it is its own body, though so changed from the seed. Does not this analogy go through nature? Is it only seeds that are different from each other, or only the bodies which seeds produce? Is not the flesh of men different from the flesh of beasts, the flesh of beasts from that of birds, theirs from that of fishes? Are the heavenly bodies like the bodies upon earth? Can you compare the one with the other? Nay, is not there a difference in degree, though not in kind, in the glory of those heavenly bodies? Is not one star more conspicuous than another? The preservation of the type, and the distinction of forms is in accordance with the law which we trace through all God's works. What wonder then if out of a perishable seed there rises that which is imperishable, out of an insignificant seed that which is glorious, out of a feeble seed that which is mighty; in the case of man out of a psychical body, a spiritual body? "For," he goes on, "there is a psychical body, and there is a spiritual." Then he cites Genesis. It is written, "The first Adam became a living soul," adding his own comment, "the last Adam became a quickening spirit."

Here is St. Paul's satisfactory explanation of his own argument. Here is that which connects it with the previous words, "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." And here is the confutation of the vulgar gloss which has been put upon the passage I have been dwelling on, when it has been supposed to intimate that the sowing of the seed in the ground is the type of putting the mortal remains of a man into the earth. How can any one read these glorious sentences in which the Apostle travels, from earth to heaven, and heaven to earth, and then suppose that the basis of them is a petty accidental resemblance, a kind of pun, which one would blush to meet with in the poorest rhetorician! No; the seed is not sown when the man ceases to dwell in this world. That which he inherits from his parents, that which belongs to him as the child of Adam, that which has gone already through a death-process in his mother's womb, that which he bears with him through all his

pilgrimage, that is it which is sown in corruption, in dishonor, in weakness; that is it to which the quickening life of the second Adam comes, which this life penetrates and purifies that it may be raised in incorruption, in glory, in power. All the former part of the chapter is at variance with itself upon any other hypothesis, still more, I think, that which remains of it. The spiritual body, he says, does not come first, but the psychical. The first man is out of the earth earthy, the second man (Lachmann omits the ὁ κύριος, perhaps rightly) out of heaven. As is the earthy, such also are the earthy, and as is the heavenly. such also are the heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly.

The twofold condition of man is set forth in these verses just as St. Paul sets it forth everywhere else, only with a new application. The divine root, the Christ, is the true ground of all life, redemption, resurrection, for the man himself, for his soul and his body. The old Adam is the root of the curse and of the death. To bear the image of the earthly is to bear the image of death. To bear the image of Christ the heavenly one, is to have life and resurrection. "For," he proceeds, "this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood are not able to inherit the kingdom of God, neither shall corruption inherit incorruption." Surely if there were no other text in the Bible, this might settle the question whether that which we give earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, that which is corruption, if any thing in the world is corruption, is that body which is to be made like Christ's glorious body, which is to inherit His incorruption. If flesh and blood did indeed constitute that body the contemplation of which threw the Psalmist into a rapture—if when the blood ceases to flow, and the flesh becomes torpid, all its marvellous powers and energies are dried up and exhausted—we might go to the charnel-house to look for the only proof that the voice which once spoke to us may speak again, that the light which beamed from the countenance may not be for ever quenched in darkness. But if every word that ever cheered us came from the Divine Word, if every smile was a witness of His presence in whom is the ful-

ness of joy, why may not the body as well as the spirit be now dwelling in that kingdom into which flesh and blood can never enter?

"Behold," says the Apostle, "I declare to you a mystery." The words which follow are susceptible of two directly opposite meanings. Our translators say, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." According to Lachmann's punctuation it would be, "We shall all sleep, but we shall not all be changed." I do not think that there can be a reasonable doubt in any man's mind, however, who reads the following verse, that the old construction is the true one, and that Lachmann has sacrificed the peculiarity of St. Paul's style, as well as his consistency, for the sake of preserving what may possibly be a more regular construction. For to what does "the moment, the twinkling of an eye, the last trump," refer, if the preceding words are "we shall not be changed?" Or what becomes of the following clause, in which it is said that "the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we *shall be* changed?

One cannot, for an instant, suspect Lachmann of any thing but a kind of philological wilfulness in departing from the common mode of stopping the sentence. But there are certainly some who might find it theologically convenient to make the Apostle speak according to his fashion. If there could be the peremptory assertion, "we shall all sleep," how much strength would the theories of those acquire who make it a fundamental article of their creed, that there shall be thousands of years during which the remains of dead bodies lie in their graves, and during which disembodied souls slumber in a kind of forgetfulness, and that then at the sound of the archangel's trumpet every morsel of dust and corruption will attach itself again to the creature which it oppressed during his sojourn on earth? But this, though a very great, and, I think, a very frightful, *marvel*, is exceedingly unlike the Apostle's idea of a *mystery*. That renovation and resurrection which he has been speaking of, he tells us has its parallels throughout all nature; this, by the confession of those who speak most of it, is absolutely unparalleled. Every

law which man has ever recognized or believed in is outraged by it. But what law is violated, what law is not fulfilled, by that unseen transformation in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, which finishes the long wrestling of the body with its case of death, which announces the triumph of the second Adam? What St. Paul would seem to be telling the Corinthians here is that those who were dead, those who had fallen asleep before Christ's coming in the flesh, would just as much share in the glorious resurrection which He had obtained for them as those who were alive then. Their flesh and blood would not inherit the kingdom of God any more than the flesh and blood of their successors. The corruption of the one would as little inherit incorruption as the corruption of the other. But the bodies of one as much as the bodies of the other, would hear the voice of the Son of Man. That voice of the archangel which on Sinai had proclaimed the law of death, would proclaim through all God's universe, in full clear notes, that death was swallowed up in victory, that the last enemy had been vanquished. That voice which all the invisible world would hear and would echo, could be repeated even here, in this visible world, by the inspired Apostle. "Where, O Death, is thy sting? Where, O Grave, is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; the strength of sin is the Law. Thanks be to God that giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

CHAPTER XVI.

This doctrine of the resurrection is so living and practical a one, that it is in as close contact with all earthly and common things as it is with the heavenly world. "Therefore, my beloved brethren," he says, 'be firm, unmoved, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." And so he proceeds to speak of the collections which were to be made on the first day of the week, of his own journeys, of his desire to come and winter with them, of

Timothy and Apollos, and the house of Stephanas, of the friends that were greeting them at a distance, of their greetings to each other. Those men who were exalting the soul, and tearing and rending the Church for the sake of their fine notions, could not touch the common earth, could only dwell in the clouds. But he who believed that the Son of God, the Lord of Glory, had dwelt upon earth and hallowed it and redeemed it, that He was the Head of the whole body, the quickening Spirit of each of its members, he felt that nothing was too glorious for humanity, nothing mean for him who was the minister of it and of its Lord. He could say, as he had said in the sterner parts of his epistle, "If any one loves not the Lord,"—if he sets up his own pride and fancies against Him,—"let him be Anathema;" he must be so. But he could say in the very same spirit, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen."

SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

I HAVE examined with some carefulness two of the Pauline Epistles, which are admitted to be genuine by the school of Bauer. Different as they are in their scope and occasion, I think we have discovered in them the traces of a common design. One as little as the other is written to establish the formal doctrine of justification by faith. One as much as the other sets forth Christ as the common foundation upon which Jew and Gentile could stand, the bond of human society, the root of human righteousness. In trying to ascertain whether the remaining ten Epistles bear the same tokens I shall be much less minute, lest the object of these lectures should be lost sight of through my attention to details, and lest I should seem to aim at supplying my reader with a commentary, not to assist him in reading the New Testament for himself.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians has a manifest connection with the First, yet they are so different in their character, and in the subjects of which they treat, that many seem to regard the external links between them as the only proofs that they were addressed to the same persons. Few, however, can fail to perceive that at least one of the threads which was woven into the web of the first letter runs through the second. The question of the honor which is due to ministers of the Gospel, arose naturally there out of the remarks on the false honor which the Corinthians were putting upon them. In the second letter the subject takes a more personal form, is more connected with conflicts and griefs, ecstasies and humiliations, in the Apostle's own mind; but it does not less concern the peculiar habits of the Corinthian Church, or the order of all Christian society.

The Apostle had spoken in the close of his last letter of visiting Corinth. He had not executed his purpose. Some mem

bers of the Church seem to have suspected him of making such promises carelessly or lightly. He protests against the imputation. He had not put off his visit inconsiderately, but deliberately. He believed it was better for them that he should not come at once. He was anxious, it seems, that they should exercise their own free judgment in the case of the person whom he had pronounced excommunicate. He did not wish to oppress that person or them by his presence. He had therefore sent Titus to them instead of going himself. He was greatly delighted with the news Titus had brought him of the way in which they received his letter, of the impression which it had made upon them, of their zeal to relieve themselves of the guilt in which he had told them they were sharers. He conceives they have done all that was required of them in punishing the incestuous offender; he was content, and even anxious, that they should now forgive him. Their forgiveness would be his, as their punishment had been his.

The Apostle dwells with characteristic fervor and animation upon this part of the report which Titus had made to him. His expressions of satisfaction are proportioned to the severity of his previous rebukes. It is evident that there were other observations made by his friend and messenger which were not equally gratifying. The Apostle hints with great delicacy and courtesy, but with some irony, that the Corinthians had promised a collection for the suffering members of other churches which they had not yet made; that the Macedonians, with less pretensions and less means, had done more; that it would be well for their honor as well as his, if his boasting of them was not proved to be untrue.

It is also clear that the jealousies and suspicions which had existed against the Apostle himself, and were stirred up by the rival parties, had not been removed by his epistle, but had taken a new form in consequence of it. "He can write powerfully," said his opponents, "when he is at a distance; but how feeble he is when he is among us!" The simple form in which he had presented his Gospel, the little pains he had taken to adapt it to the refined palates of intellectual people, were still causes of of-

fence. There were many who represented him as only half an apostle, without the outward designation of one, without the proofs of a commission which those of the circumcision had, or the eloquence which belonged to Apollos. The old leaven was evidently at work. False apostles, mere traders in a Gospel, who would have been inferior sophists among heathens, were doing their utmost to establish their own reputation by undermining Paul. Vanity, party-spirit, self-exaltation, were still painfully characteristic of the Church. And where these existed, however much there might be of genuine sorrow for a particular offence, even of practical amendment, there could not be that repentance and reformation which spring from a full knowledge of the evil that each man has in himself. The old sensual corruptions, as well as the old intellectual conceits, would manifest themselves as they had done before.

Such being the external circumstances which suggested the epistle, St. Paul, if he had had no other impulse, might naturally have discoursed on his own position and powers, or more generally on the position and powers of an apostle. But there was that in himself which more mightily compelled him to speak upon this subject, and which prevented him from treating it in a dry, didactic method. He says in the commencement of the letter, which is even more than ordinarily the guide to all the contents of it, that he would not have them ignorant of the conflict which came upon him in Asia, that he was distressed out of measure, that he despaired even of life. He rejoices in this conflict because it has shown him the death which is in himself, and the life which is in Christ; because it has taught him not to trust in himself, but in Him who raises the dead. He rejoices in it, further, because he believes that the consolation which he has received will affect others as well as himself, that as he has known the sorrows of others in himself, so they will share also in his thanksgiving.

This certainty that what he has gone through has been for the sake of others, that he has been entering into human grief and human joy as Christ himself did, gives him a sense of the nature

of his ministry which all his previous experience had not imparted to him. Down in the depths of his own being he had been learning what a Gospel of life he had to preach, how close to every man lies the death from which that Gospel announces deliverance. It is awful to think of the power of his own words, what mysteries he has been proclaiming to human beings, how the knowledge of those mysteries may harden and stupefy the hearts which it does not purify. The mere trader in the divine word has no such sense of the fearfulness of his vocation; but one who is determined to speak it out in sincerity as God's message must feel his own insufficiency.

Even the announcement of this determination sounds to him almost like a vaunt, or as if he wished to commend himself to the Corinthians. But that is not his meaning. He wants no commendatory letters to them or from them. He desires to grave his letters in their hearts, that they may themselves be his epistles. For this is the character of the New Testament ministry, this is its contrast with the Old. It is not written on stones, but in the heart. It does not stand outside of the man as a ministry of law and of terror, but comes to his own self as an effective ministry of righteousness. It is not the exhibition of God under a veil, but the manifestation of His unveiled face in Christ to the creature which is made in His image.

On this account, St. Paul tells the Corinthians who had complained of him for his plainness that he is *bound* to use great simplicity of speech. Those who maintained the Old Testament ministry against the New, might indeed clothe their speech in symbols, as Moses had hid his face with a veil. They could not look to the end of that which was abolished, for the veil was upon their hearts, that Old Testament veil which was done away in Christ. When they turned round to the Lord, the Ruler of their spirits, the veil would be taken away, and they would have the true spiritual liberty. Meantime, we who *have* confessed Him, with unveiled face beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord's Spirit.

Here then is the full explanation of what he had said before. There must be no craft or trickery in the management of this word of God. The New Testament minister must by manifestation of the truth commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And what if with all our boldness and plainness, there is still a veil over the Gospel, the veil is not in it, but in the hearts of those that believe not, whose thoughts the god of this world has blinded, so that the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, does not shine into them. For it is not ourselves we are preaching, but Him, the Illuminator of our hearts, in whose face the glory of God is made known to us.

And since it was not himself that he preached, but Christ, they might see why he had to go through such conflicts as that of which he had spoken. It was that the mere individual man might be crushed, and that the Christ might be revealed in all His power to the hearers as well as to the preacher. Through this came out his own faith in the power of the risen Christ, through this, his ability to speak of it. The outside man was consuming in these fires, the inner man was becoming renewed day by day. An invisible and eternal glory was manifesting itself and working itself out through these afflictions. He knew it to be so whenever his mind was fixed not upon the things seen but the things unseen ; for the things seen were for a moment, the things not seen were eternal.

This contrast between that invisible and eternal glory of Christ which was revealing itself in them and through them, leads to the memorable passage respecting the earthly house of this tabernacle and the building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, which is expanded through the fifth chapter. It is easy to see that that chapter could not have been written even by an Apostle who had not passed, and very recently passed, through the agony which he has recorded. Not a single sentence of it is intelligible if we forget that personal experience, or the results of it which have been referred to in the former part of the letter. If it is regarded as a mere history of

a man balancing the future life against the present life, the world before death with the world after death, its whole meaning, either as it concerns the writer or the reader, is shrivelled and exhausted. But if it is the new Adam in the man struggling with the old, if it is the man claiming his portion in a divine and immortal Lord, confident of a new life for his body and spirit in Him, confident that that life is for his brethren as well as himself, and therefore willing that his present tabernacle should fall to pieces whenever it pleases God that it should, though perfectly content to groan in it while that is his appointed lot ; then we can understand why he should speak of walking by faith, not by sight, of being absent from the body and present with the Lord, of desiring, whether absent or present, to be acceptable to Him. Then we can understand why he should anticipate for all men a manifestation before Christ the Lord of their spirits, that each may receive the things done through the instrumentality of the body, whether that be good or ill. And we can see how he connects this with what has gone before respecting the character of his ministry,—with his zeal, knowing the fear of God, to persuade men,—with his hope that his word is not only manifest to God, but manifest in their consciences. And one can see why with this confidence he should care very little whether he passed for a madman or a sober man in the estimate of those critics who judged by the mere outside. The love of Christ was pressing him to speak ; for he had come to this conclusion, that if One died for all, then were all dead, and that he died for all, that those who live should not live to themselves, but to Him who died for them and rose again. And thus too we can attach some meaning to those great words which follow : " So, if this be so, if there is this Lord over our spirits, and to speak of Him is our work, and to know him is our reward, henceforth know we no man after the flesh ; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. He is revealed to us as the Lord from heaven, as the Author of a new creation, so that if any man is in Christ he is a new creature ; the old things have passed away, behold, all things have become

new. And all things," he says, "are of that God who had reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation," All things must be contemplated as grounded in Him, as proceeding from Him. We are to testify "that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not reckoning their trespasses to them, and putting in us the word of reconciliation." Here is the statement of the object of that ministry, the preparation for which he had been explaining to us before.

He is then an ambassador for Christ. God is exhorting them by him. He is praying them for Christ's sake, to be reconciled to God. Being able to announce that the reconciliation is accomplished, that He who knew no sin has been made sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, all he has to do is to beseech them not to receive the grace which has been given to them in vain. They have heard of a gracious or acceptable time, a day of jubilee. It is now; the day is come. And he and those who are the heralds of that day, the messengers of the New Testament reconciliation, are bound in nothing to give offence; in all things to show that they are God's ministers, exhibiting in themselves that contrast between power and weakness, glory and shame, death and life, which they preach with their lips when they preach Christ's Cross and Resurrection, and say that men are to learn from these God's will and their own condition.

The Apostle has poured out his heart to the Corinthians; he has shown them that in his secret battles he has been fighting for them as much as for himself. Now he beseeches them for a return, not a cold, dry, critical appreciation of his eloquence, or a comparison of him with other doctors, but the sympathy of churchmen, if not the affection of children to a father. To many it may seem that his exhortation not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers, though needful in itself, is out of place here. But the knowledge which the first epistle gives us of the Corinthians, enables us to see its appropriateness, and the sense which it must bear. The Corinthian Christians were willing enough to

exalt themselves above heathens, and to pass judgment upon them. But the habits of heathens they had not cast aside, the real glory of their Christian fellowship they had not understood. In nothing was the old Pagan temper more conspicuous than in the way of estimating their teachers. The most dividing and demoralizing tendencies of old Greece, those which were least compatible with the existence of one body with many members, broke out in their comparison of Paul with Apollos, in their desire to treat them both as sophists, not as divine ambassadors. The exhortation to come out and be separate from these unbelieving habits, is therefore a natural sequel to what the Apostle has said already, an introduction to what he is about to say of himself and his work.

It is sometimes thought that the latter part of this Epistle has an almost painfully personal character; so much is said of the suspicions of the Corinthians; of false Apostles; of St. Paul's revelations; of his sufferings and humiliations. Doubtless if this part of the letter were separated from the other and were not interpreted by it, we should not be able to account for these allusions; we might have thought that the man had got the better of the ambassador. But when we have learnt how essentially the man and the ambassador are one, how impossible it is that they should ever be separated unless the office is ill discharged, or the human creature becomes a merely selfish one, the confession of personal grievances and sufferings, the "folly," to use his own language, the boasting, the shame, are not merely revelations of a character which we should rejoice to meet with elsewhere, but are in the strictest sense such revelations of the relation between God and his creatures, and of the close bonds by which one man is related to another, as we look for in our Bible, and we shall find very imperfectly except there.

I have alluded to the communications which he had received from Titus. There is nothing unnatural or violent in the transition to these. We feel that they have been worked into the tissue of the Apostle's own life, that they have mingled with the pains and consolations with which he has already made us ac-

quainted. I have remarked that he dwells first on the pleasant part of the news, passes gradually to that which is less encouraging, comes at last upon that which is most discreditable to his disciples and most bitter to himself. The subject of the Epistle is never forgotten. The keen satisfaction of the minister of Christ in any symptoms of good or improvement in his children, his clear and tender perception of their weaknesses, illustrate the doctrine that has been previously unfolded. Only when he comes to the injustice of the Corinthians towards himself personally, we seem to have the full exposition of that conflict which he had represented to us in general terms, and of which he had given us the results rather than the particulars.

The Apostle, we have seen, had been charged with assuming power to himself in his letters which he could not sustain by his personal appearance ; for when he measured himself against the other teachers he was found inferior to them. This charge seems to have proceeded from teachers who trafficked with the honorable name of Apollos, and endeavored to draw followers after them by imitating his method. He declines all comparison with these men. Neither he nor they are the standard by which an Apostle's work is to be tried. It is God's calling. He has gone where he was sent. If these people have another Gospel to preach, or another Spirit to impart, be it so. Otherwise there is no excuse for their undervaluing of him. Whether he is insignificant or not in speech, he has told them what they wanted to know ; he has at least preached to them freely ; others have supported him, not they. If he has used authority heretofore not for their injury, but for their benefit, he will use it still. He will not let them be the victims of deceivers, though they may wish to be so. He has bound them to Christ ; he will not give them up to those who pretend to be ministers of light while they are doing the works of the Spirit of evil.

Do they want tests of apostleship that are visible and palpable ? What would they have ? Do they want circumcised men, children of Abraham ? He is that. Do they want men who have suffered ? He has suffered as much as any. All these are mere

vain things. He is unwilling to speak of them. It is folly to speak of them. But if they call upon him for such tokens, there they are.

Or perhaps they want men who have had mysterious revelations. He is not afraid to speak of such. For they do not glorify him as an individual. It is only as a man in Christ that they have been granted to him. And bitter humiliations have followed them. He has been taught not to exult in that which did not belong to himself. Therefore the infirmities, contempts, necessities, which were the signs of his fellowship with humanity, are as precious marks of Christ's mercy as these revelations.

He has laid himself bare before them, has become a fool for their sakes, and now he will come to them again the third time in the same spirit as before, not to exact over them, not to plunder them, not to apologize to them, but to build up their Church, and for that end, if need be, to censure without sparing those who are corrupting and dividing it. They ask for proofs that Christ is speaking in him ; they shall have them. He will come to them in his own weakness, but he will come to them in the might of Christ. He will speak to them of their own earthly weakness and of their own divine might. "Try yourselves," he exclaims, "whether you are in the faith. Bring yourselves to the proof. Do ye not know your own selves that Jesus Christ is in you, unless indeed you are reprobate?" Our translators have used this word here with excellent effect. "Prove yourselves" answers to "reprobate," as δοκιμάζετε answers to ἀδόκιμοι. And thus we arrive at the true meaning of *reprobate*, that which has been tried and found worthless, not that which has been cast aside without trial. Still the Latin word does not express the whole meaning of the Greek word. The ἀδόκιμος is one who has lost the power of testing and proving himself. This is the sign that he has been proved worthless. If they do not know themselves, if they do not know that Christ is in them, they deserve this name, because they have lost the capacity of apprehending the truth. Paul hopes to show them that *in this sense*

he is not reprobate; though as far as that word implies the loss of all reputation with them, he is willing to deserve it, so long as he may do them good. He has no power against the truth, only as a witness for the truth. He is glad to be weak if they may be strong. All he wishes is to establish them, to bind them together. He writes to them at a distance that he may not use the power which he possesses for edification and not destruction, when he is among them. He bids them rejoice, be strong, be of one mind, be at peace, and he assured them that the God of love and peace will be with them.

EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

I TOOK a sentence of this Epistle as the starting-point of my remarks upon St. Paul; it seemed so remarkably to declare the object of his life as well as of his writings. Of course I must look upon that sentence as denoting the object of the letter in which it occurs. But I do not wish to force that observation upon the reader. I hope it will impress itself upon him without any effort, when he considers the relation in which the Apostle was standing to his Galatian converts.

There is little difference of opinion about the objects of the teachers who had sought to turn this Church from St. Paul's doctrines, or about the kind of influence which they exerted. That they were Judaizing Christians; that they endeavored to set up the Apostles of the Circumcision against the Apostles of the Gentiles—representing him to be not an Apostle at all, but one who had derived his wisdom from the original twelve, and had perverted what he had learnt; that they maintained the privileges of those who were circumcised to be immeasurably greater than the privileges of those who were merely baptized—even if the latter could be counted in a safe condition; that the

Galatians who had received St. Paul with passionate fervor, listened to these insinuations against him, and began to suspect that he had deceived them about their own position ; this is generally admitted, and is obvious to any reader of the letter.

In the opening assertion that he was an Apostle not of men, or by man, he joins issue with the teachers who had spoken of those whom Christ had called while on earth, as his masters and as possessing a title to obedience which he could never claim. Much more was involved in this objection than a mere personal slander. The heresy that Christ was a great and divine Prophet during the thirty-three years that he stayed on earth, but those years were not the manifestation of One who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, was involved in it. Christ had exhausted his power of designating Apostles ; He was not really ruling His Church after He ascended. St. Paul's calling was the practical answer to this denial, in which the whole Gospel was involved ; therefore he insists upon it ; heedless, as in the case of the Corinthians, whether he was called arrogant and self-exalting or not.

The first two chapters are mainly occupied in explaining his relation to the Apostles of the circumcision. But he gives the Galatians at once to understand that he enters upon this subject because the very existence of their faith was in hazard. These new doctors were not hurting his reputation, or substituting another *mode* of teaching for his. They were utterly undermining the New Testament dispensation ; they were preaching another Gospel—which was not another, which was no Gospel. He keeps no terms with them ; he denounces and anathematizes them as robbers of the Gentiles and of mankind. They were practising the easiest and oldest of tricks with the old success, persuading their hearers that bondage was a safer state than freedom. There was no way to deal with such men but to tell them that whatever they might pretend, however religious they might be, they were denying Christ who came to set men free.

He reminds them of his own vehement addiction to Jewish traditions. He had known what these were, better than any of

those who were now exalting them. Only because it pleased God to reveal His Son in him did he escape from them, or find that he had a message which he must deliver to all men. He had not to learn what it was from Peter or John or any one else. After three years indeed in Arabia, he came up to Jerusalem and stayed fifteen days with Peter, seeing also James the brother of the Lord. But he had no further communication with the churches of Judæa for fourteen years. Then, when he had been engaged in his mission to the Gentiles with Barnabas, they went up to Jerusalem ; they went by revelation, and they desired an additional witness that they were not running in vain or laboring in vain. But they submitted to no dictation. They did not allow Titus, who was a Greek, to be circumcised, however much some, perhaps even the Apostles, might have desired it in deference to the prejudices of false brethren who wished to rob them of their liberty. To such he would yield place, no not for an hour. And ultimately, he says, those who seemed to be the pillars of the Church imposed no new restraints upon them, but gave them the right hand of fellowship, treating their work as a distinct one from their own, though urging them (not unwilling) to remember their poor countrymen.

So far he had proved that the Apostles of Jerusalem were not his lawgivers or judges. At Antioch he went further. He rebuked Peter to the face, because at first he had eaten freely with Gentiles ; afterward when certain came down from James he had stood aloof from them, setting an example to the other Jews, and even drawing Barnabas after him. This conduct Paul rebuked as contrary to the truth of the Gospel. He said to Peter before them all, "If thou, being a Jew, livest as a Gentile, by what right dost thou force the Gentile to Judaize?" According to Lachmann's arrangement of the sentences, this is all that he said at that time ; what follows belongs to the Epistle.

I cannot but think the old division is the right one. The words quoted could not have been intelligible to Peter and the Jews without those which succeed them. It might easily be said, "No doubt you who call yourself an Apostle of the Gentiles

have a great interest in maintaining their equality with the Jews; Peter, as an Apostle of the Circumcision, is equally bound to assert the difference between them." I conceive that Paul desired to show Peter that he, though an Apostle of the circumcision, was as much bound to maintain this principle, was as inconsistent in not maintaining it, as he himself would have been. There were points, they had agreed, in which it behoved them to take one course and him another. He desires to make it clear that this was not one of those cases; that Peter could not maintain the truth which they held in common, if, in deference to the prejudices of any men whatsoever, he disclaimed complete brotherly fellowship with the Gentiles.

Here is his argument. "We Jews by nature, and not sinners out of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but through faith of Jesus Christ, we too have believed on Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." As if he had said, "You are a Jew, are you not? You have not the disadvantage of these Gentiles; you are not a sinner because you belong to them. And yet you have believed in Christ, you have felt that you were a just and righteous man only in virtue of your belief in Him, that you were not a righteous or justified man in virtue of any thing that you did as a Jew, of any thing that distinguished you from the Gentiles." "But if," he goes on, "we, seeking to be justified in Christ, have been found also ourselves sinners,"—if by seeking this righteousness we have confessed that we are sinners as much as those who were not in our covenant, who had not our law,—do we thereby make Christ the servant of sin?" For this, no doubt, was the kind of reasoning which the Judaizing Christians used. They said, "In lowering ourselves to the level of the Gentiles, we are lowering our Master; we are acting as if He merely came as a minister of Gentile sinners, not to deliver holy Israel." "But is it so?" St. Paul asks. "No verily. I constitute myself a transgressor by seeking to build up again those things which I had thrown down. No doubt I, Jew as I

am, am a sinner in myself. The Jewish law tells me I am ; nay tells me that I am dead. I am dead in myself that I might live to God. I am crucified with Christ. I live, not I, but Christ lives in me ; and that which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of God and of Christ who has loved me, and has given Himself for me. I will not make void the grace of God. If through the law is righteousness, then hath Christ died in vain."

It is a great cause of exultation to Bauer and his school, that St. Paul should have set himself thus passionately in opposition to the Jerusalem doctors, and should have shown the chief of them how near he was to that doctrine which afterwards was called Ebionitic. But if I wanted to curb the steed and check the pride of these neologians, this is the very passage on which I should most dwell. Does St. Paul set up his theory of the Gospel against that of the other Apostles, his doctrine of Justification against their doctrine of Works, his belief in Christ against their belief in the Law? Does not the whole force of his argument turn upon this ; that he is convicting Peter of an act of temporary treason against his *own* faith, his *own* convictions, his *own* habitual professions? Would not the whole of this famous speech be a silly waste of words if it did not show what the faith of a Jew, of a circumcised man, of an Apostle of the Circumcision, must be, in order that he might justify his trust in Christ to his own heart and to his countrymen, supposing there were not a Gentile in the world? If Peter had one Gospel and Paul another, the former was not to be blamed for the course he took ; there was nothing insincere or wrong in it. If, on the other hand, the peculiar position of himself and of James, the strong obligation which was laid upon them of showing how great the privileges of the Jew were, exposed them to a particular kind of temptation, into which temptation Peter on this occasion fell,—and in the city where it was likely to be most mischievous, —doing thereby as much harm to his own countrymen as to the Gentiles, how desirable was it that such a testimony as this should be bore to the truth of the Gospel for which they were both equally pledged to live and die.

The Apostle, as usual, has done a great deal of work in a very short space. Whilst appearing only to defend his own title against those who were disparaging it, he has really entered into the very heart of the subject; he has torn to pieces the new Gospel of these Judaizers, as well as taken from them the authority upon which they pretended to rest it. And now then he can turn to their victims. Not, however, that there is any real chasm between the address he made to Peter at Antioch and that which he makes here to the foolish Galatians. There he had said that he was dead with Christ, that he lived by Him; here he asks who had enchanted them before whose eyes Christ Jesus had been set forth crucified. I do not ask whether the words "in you" ought to stand or to be thrown out. I rest nothing upon them. I only ask that we should take the previous passage together with the sixth and seventh chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, to explain why he speaks in this place of Christ being crucified. If he had not preached to the Galatians that they were crucified with Christ, that Christ lived in them, there would seem no reason for such language, nor would it stand in any evident connection with what follows. He asks them whether they received the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith. He surely intimates that the gift of the Spirit was the great sign that the Christ had come, and that the New Testament covenant had displaced the Old. Had this then, the highest and most perfect gift of all, been bestowed because they had done some great acts to deserve it, or because they trusted God as a Father to give good gifts to His children? He stops for a moment to ask whether they really think that there can be any greater blessing than this, whether outward fleshly gifts can make them more complete than this spiritual one. And then he proceeds to argue with the Judaizers entirely upon their own ground. It is the covenant with Abraham they prize so highly. What is that covenant? Its ground is belief in God, its personal fruit is righteousness, its full expression is, "In thee shall all the nations be blessed." If you want to be blessed with Abraham, you must believe in God as he did. But you are not con-

tent with that; you want to be under the law. That is, you want not to be under a blessing, but under a curse. The law is ratified by a curse. Those who had the law did not want to be under it; for the Prophet said, "the just man shall live by faith." The law is not of faith. Its formulary is, "he that doeth these things shall live by them." Christ enduring the accursed cross, redeemed us from that death which is the law's curse, the death which is upon all men alike; that so in Him the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles as well as the Jews, that "we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

The Epistle to the Romans has prepared us for this kind of argument; but it is put here more sharply and epigrammatically, more suitably to the character of the Galatian people. The contrast between the blessing of the covenant and the curse of the law would startle them by its evident truth, however little they might have thought of it before. Of the same character are the remarks which follow. A human covenant would not be set aside or disannulled by him who made it. The promises to Abraham and to his seed were made by God Himself. Would God's law set those aside? And mark the words of the promise. It is to Abraham and his *seed*, not to his *seeds*. It may be thought that here St. Paul is playing with words, accommodating himself to the temper either of the Rabbinical teachers, or of the lively superficial people who had been misled by them. I do not deny that he was acquainted with the habits of both, and that he availed himself of his knowledge. But if he does, it is not for the purpose of confirming the disease, but of curing it. The difference which he points out between seeds and seed is a radical one. It catches the ear. But the further you look into it the more important it becomes. As in the Epistle to the Romans he had so successfully turned the prejudice of the Israelite against the Ishmaelite and the Edomite to their confutation, showing that the calling of Isaac and Jacob were signs that the covenant was *not* a fleshly one, as they were making it out to be when they were seeking to exclude the Gentiles; so here he dwells upon the fact that it was not the different seeds of

Abraham but the one seed to whom the promise was made, as a witness that there was one person contemplated in the scheme of God, as He in whom all the families of the earth were to have a blessing. If, then,—his argument is,—the Jew claims a blessing as a descendant of Abraham, he must first of all claim it simply as a blessing; secondly, he must claim it through a person, the Mediator of it; thirdly, he must claim it as one of indefinite and universal extent.

But what, then, is the meaning of the Law if it stands out thus in opposition to the Covenant and the Promise? He answers, "It was added, because of transgressions." It presumes wrong-doing, the separation of those to whom it is sent from Him who has chosen them and revealed Himself to them. The law he describes as serving this purpose till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. It was ordained, he says, through angels, but it was in the hand of a Mediator. He adds, "Now a Mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? No, verily. If a law had been given that could impart life, truly righteousness would have been by law. But the Scripture has concluded all things under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe." This doctrine of Law as administered by angels, has a very important bearing upon the New Testament revelation. It forms a link between this Epistle and that to the Hebrews. There the new dispensation is spoken of as the dispensation of a Son, in contrast with the old as a dispensation by Angels. At the same time it is shown that a Son was pointed at and implied in every part of Jewish history and prophecy. Here the subject is contemplated less generally, and from a somewhat different point of view. The promises of God are said all to point to a certain seed; the law is said to be given through angels or messengers, yet with continual reference to a Mediator in whom the law is accomplished, in whom God and man are united. The law expresses the separation between them. Herein lies its curse. The covenant expresses the union between man and God. Herein consists its blessing. But the

blessing can only be realized, the curse can only be taken away, when He who is at once the Seed and the Mediator is manifested. The law implies that there are two parties who must be reconciled. But though there are these two parties, since God is one, since He is always the same, how can His law and His promises be contrary to each other? They cannot be contrary. Their object as well as their source must be the same. Law proclaims righteousness. Had it the power it would make men righteous. But it has not the power; it never can give life. The Scripture, or perhaps more properly the written letter used as an equivalent for the law, hath shut up all things under sin, that the promise of righteousness and life might be given to those who have faith in Christ. Language very similar to this I have considered at large while commenting upon the Epistle to the Romans. To that Epistle we must turn for the full explanation of the law of sin and of righteousness, of the truth that the flesh is convicted of having no good thing in itself, that righteousness comes from Christ upon all who believe. What we have to take notice of here is the particular phraseology "shut up," kept in garrison under law, with a view to the faith which was afterwards to be revealed. What the Judaizing teachers had said to the Galatians was, that the old covenant and law put men into a more perfect state than the new baptism. That was good as far as it went; it was a preliminary. But if they would stand on a high ground they must add the Judaical rite. His great object therefore is to reverse this order, to show that the old must have been the preliminary, that law and covenant both implied something as existing which had not yet been declared. This state, which the silly Galatians were imagining as one of special elevation, was, in fact, in its very nature elementary. The law was the pedagogue leading men to Christ, that they might be made righteous by faith in Him. But now that faith had come, now that the object of faith had been revealed, they were not subject to this schoolmaster. "For ye are all sons of God through the faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek,

there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female ; you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise." This is the conclusion to which he has been bringing us from the first. Sonship to God is the highest state of all. Every thing in the old dispensation has been hinting at that, looking forward to the time when Jews—when men—should be able to claim it. The time is come. You Gentiles have been baptized into Christ, you have put on Christ, you have claimed in Him the state of Sonship. What more do you want? Is it to be heirs of Abraham's blessing? You are that already. This is the inheritance.

Then comes that remarkable passage, so all important for the understanding of St. Paul, in which he affirms that men did not *begin* to be sons of God when they were *declared* sons of God, that their previous discipline and education implied that this was their character, just as the Roman act of emancipation did not cause those to be children who had not been so already, but recognized and affirmed them to be children, and put them in possession of the rights belonging to that relation. What is specially to be observed is, that the Apostle draws no distinction in this respect between Jews and Gentiles. We might have concluded that the Jews, the chosen people of God, were children under education, treated as servants up to the hour of emancipation. But here, as everywhere, St. Paul is a leveller. We, he says, while we were infants were in servitude under the elements of the world ; you that did not know God were in servitude to those that by nature are not Gods. He does not of course confound the Jew with the Gentile ; he does not undervalue the deliverance from idolatry ; but he describes one as well as the other as being children under servitude, one as well as the other as being subjected to elements of the world, in order that they might be trained for that fulness of the time when Christ, made of a woman, made under the law, should redeem those who were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons, and when, because they were sons, He should send forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, crying Abba, Father.

He considers then their adherence to these Judaizing teachers as nothing less than a relapse into idolatry. He had delivered them from it only by preaching that the unseen God had sent forth His Son to claim them from the service of outward visible things, and adopt them into His family. If they were not adopted into His family, if they were to become servants of visible things, in order that they might attain a more perfect state, it did not signify what they called themselves; they were separating themselves from the God of Abraham and doing homage to those against whom law and prophets had borne witness. This was a startling charge for those to hear who fancied themselves ultra-Jews, and who professed to raise the Gentiles to their level. But it is in perfect consistency with all St. Paul's teaching. Jews, he saw, must become idolaters, the worst kind of idolaters, unless they preached a Gospel of deliverance to idolaters which was equally a Gospel for themselves.

It is this conviction which comes out so strongly in the verses from the 11th to 21st of the 4th chapter. He is afraid for the Galatians lest he should have labored among them in vain. It is not that they have done him any wrong. All he wants is that they should share the blessing which belongs to them as much as to him. They knew very well that he came to them in weakness. There was something in his circumstances, apparently, on his first visit which was especially humiliating. Yet it did not interfere with their receiving him as an angel of God, as if Christ Himself had come among them. At that time they would have dug out their eyes to give to him. They were wonderfully zealous; and zeal is an excellent thing if it is in a good cause, and if it does not spend itself in mere love to those who are present. But there is a zeal which is not at all excellent. There are those who show a great deal of zeal in robbing their disciples of that which is most precious, in order that they may depend upon *them* and admire *them*. It is not that kind of affection which St. Paul would cultivate towards his disciples, or would win from them. Yet he does feel for them a mother's love and a mother's pangs. He travails again in birth for them until Christ be formed in

them. For this is what he desires for them, not something foreign and external to themselves. While they are seeking mere externals he must be in doubt of them, nay, he must come to them again with a changed and sterner voice.

After this utterance of personal feeling which belongs just as much to the object and essence of the Epistle, as passages of a similar kind did in the Epistle to the Corinthians, he returns again to his old line of argument. He still uses the *argumentum ad hominem*, he still takes up the tone of thought which was familiar to the Jews, divesting it of its triviality, bringing out the truth which was latent in it. You wish to be under law, that is under the Old Testament economy. Let us hear then what we are told in the books which expound that economy to us. Consider the story of Hagar and Sarah, of Isaac and Ishmael. Your teachers are in the habit of dwelling upon it and deducing all sorts of fanciful meanings from it. I admit that it has a meaning. What is it? The child of the flesh was the child of Hagar; the child of the promise was the child of Sarah. Sarah was a freewoman, Hagar was a bondslave. I have called you to be children of the promise, children of God's covenant: they want you to be children of bondage, servants of the law that was proclaimed on Sinai. I grant you they would connect you with Jerusalem; but it is not with God's Jerusalem, with the divine, free, heavenly city. It is with a fleshly, earthly, slavish city, which is in bondage with all her children. I call you to be citizens of that city,—children of that mother of whom the prophet speaks as the true Sarah that was barren and did not bring forth, and yet was to have many more children than the other. I know that if you claim this liberty and this citizenship, you will endure persecution and suffering from those who are content with fleshly bondage. But the divine word has gone forth, "Cast out the bondwoman and her children; for the children of the bondwoman shall not be heirs with the children of the free." A strangely new moral of the story it must have seemed to the Rabbis, one that had never occurred to them amidst all the multitude of allegories they were in the habit of spinning. But

it carried its own evidence with it. It was no mere pretty application of a story. It was the detection in one particular case of a divine law which might be traced through every fact of the divine history.

Freedom is held out to man as the effect of all God's dealings with him. Christ had fulfilled the law in working out freedom for men. In His freedom they were to stand fast. To stoop to bondage was to renounce Him. To be circumcised was to say that He had not redeemed them. It was to lay themselves under the obligation of doing the whole law; it was to fall from grace. "For we in spirit by faith receive the hope of righteousness." This is our reward, this is our expectation, to know God's righteousness and to be partakers of it. If we are united to Christ, if we are made sons of God in Him, then we have this reward; for in Him neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith energizing through love. That is, to speak plainly, there would be no faith working through love, there would be no aspiring after righteousness in those who supposed that circumcision was to save them or to perfect them; they would not understand what they were saved from, they would have no dream of what perfection consists in. The Apostle therefore does not disguise that he is alarmed for them. He trusts that the leaven was not gone into their hearts; but a little leaven may leaven the whole lump. Whoever it is who has troubled them with this new Gospel about circumcision, will bear his burden. It was a very easy doctrine to preach. A great deal of persecution among men might be avoided by it; but he trusted that God would cut off those who troubled them.

The hint which he has given about the moral effects of liberty and slavery, is followed out through the rest of the Epistle. What did his opponents suppose that he meant by liberty? Did they think that he meant the liberty of the flesh, the liberty of each man to please himself? No, but it was the liberty of yielding to God's Spirit, the liberty to serve one another in love. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," was the great law of liberty: the right to bite and devour one another was a very

miserable right indeed. There were two powers contending for them. The flesh was lusting against the Spirit, the Spirit against the flesh; so that they did not do the things which they would, either all the good or all the evil which they intended. But if they submitted to be led by the spirit, they would not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, and they would not be under the yoke of law. For law exists to condemn the acts of the flesh, and the fruits of the Spirit are those against which there is no law. As he had already declared, the privilege of those who belonged to Christ is, that they are crucified with him; they have renounced the flesh and the lusts which are their own; they have claimed the righteousness and life which are in Him.

I have noticed elsewhere the memorable coincidence which there is between this passage in the Epistle which is supposed to be the most Pauline, the most anti-Jacobite, and the Epistle of St. James. And the coincidence is expressly in the assertion of liberty. The regal law of St. James is the law of liberty in the Epistle to the Galatians. Upon the assertion that the Son of God has come that we might have power to be spiritual creatures, and to carry out God's will in the spirit, both teachers insist equally. And both apply it to the confutation of Jewish vanity and pharisaism. Only the work of St. James was to confute the Pharisee, by showing him what the ceremonial of his law meant, how it might be learned and fulfilled by one who regarded the true service of God as consisting in visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction; whereas the work of St. Paul was to show what foundation had been laid for a spiritual and universal economy after the Jewish ceremonial and polity should have crumbled. In pursuance of that object, the last part of the Epistle is occupied in pointing out what sympathy and fellowship the members of the church would have with each other, what capacity of restoring those who had fallen, what distrust of themselves, what readiness to bear the burdens of one another and to endure their own, what a communication of blessings there would be between the teacher and the taught, what an unfainting zeal in doing good, what hope of a harvest of eternal

life, if they sowed to the Spirit; and what poor and miserable results if they sowed to the flesh, even if they had ever so much zeal about circumcision and law. That zeal, when it took the form of forcing a bondage upon the Gentiles, was fleshly in the simplest sense; it was a rebellion against the cross of Christ, in which alone the Apostle desired to glory, by which the world was crucified to him and he to the world. In Christ Jesus there was a new creation; circumcision and uncircumcision were at an end. To all who would walk according to that rule he wished mercy and peace, and to the Israel of God.

EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

THE relations of St. Paul with the Ephesians cannot be as accurately determined from the Epistle itself as those with the Corinthians and Galatians. But, on the other hand, there is no Church respecting which we have so much information from other sources. The 19th and 20th chapters of the Acts of the Apostles give us hints which are invaluable. We know from the previous chapter that Apollos had visited Ephesus while he was in the fervor of his first convictions, before Aquila and Priscilla had instructed him respecting the Christ. The opening of the 19th chapter explains the character and effect of his preaching. St. Paul finds certain disciples. He at once asks them the question, "Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed?" to which they answer, "We have not so much as heard if there is a Holy Spirit." He asks them, "Into what were ye then baptized?" They reply, "To John's Baptism." These men belonged to no Apollos school such as we hear of afterwards in Corinth. That school was Christian in the admitted sense of the word, however, like every school, it might divide Christ. On the other hand, it must not be supposed that the Alexandrian characteristics of Apollos were absorbed in his reverence for the teaching of John the Baptist. We may be tolerably sure that he would speak of John as having come to withdraw his countrymen from sensible and visible things, and to fix their minds on the divine and Eternal Teacher, Light, Word. In this sense he spoke of a divine Lord, and those who listened to him might truly be called "disciples" by St. Luke. His acknowledgment of John's mission raised him far above the mere Theosophers of his city. It brought him in contact with the people; it made him, to a certain extent, a leveller. It may have combined with

his previous Philonic education to break down his Jewish prejudices, and to prepare him for seeing children of Abraham raised out of stones. That which he and his followers wanted, as St. Paul's words to them show, was a belief that the King of whom John spoke had been manifested, and that he was baptizing, as St. John said He would, with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

This is the first great help in ascertaining the condition of the Ephesian Church. Though it would be rash to say that these twelve Johannine disciples formed the nucleus of the Christian society in Ephesus, we may suppose that St. Luke would not have alluded to them in this place when he is recording the commencement of St. Paul's two years' preaching, if the facts had not some close connection with each other. The next of which he speaks points to a more formal desertion of the synagogue than we read of elsewhere. For three months Paul discoursed in it with the freedom which Jews seem seldom to have refused to Rabbis who assumed the Scriptures as the data from which they reasoned. But observing, it would seem, that his disputations were doing harm rather than good, that the conscience of the Jews was becoming harder, and that they were misrepresenting his teaching to the multitude, he separated himself, and discoursed daily in the school of one Tyrannus. Here Jews and Gentiles were admitted indiscriminately ; in the most important city of Asia Minor a Jew was heard for two years, declaring a message from God to both equally.

Next we hear of unusual powers of healing exercised by the Apostle. It would be in accordance with the notions commonly entertained of these powers to assume that they were more frequent and remarkable in Ephesus, because it was a greater resort of strangers than any city which St. Paul had yet visited. I do not undervalue that explanation ; but I think St. Luke himself suggests another, which demands at least equal attention, He has already led us to observe that the *Christians* in Ephesus required to be impressed with the sense of spiritual power. Their *moral* preparation since they had begun from the preacher

of repentance was the best possible. But that victory over the powers of evil, which was indicated by the miracles of our Lord and His Apostles, they had not yet entered into. Perhaps they shrunk instinctively from the belief in powers which they saw abused to the most shameful and demoralizing purposes. For it is evident from St. Luke's account that the arts of sorcery and magic, all those acts which betoken the belief in the presence of a spirit, but not of a holy Spirit, were flourishing here in great luxuriance. Every thing in the history of the Old or New Testament would suggest the thought, that the exhibitions of *divine* power took a more startling form where superstitions grounded mainly on the reverence for *diabolical* power were prevalent; that they were the proclamations of a beneficent and orderly government which had been manifested to counteract and overcome one that was irregular and malevolent. In this way a deadly blow was given to idolatry, which relied mainly for its defence on appeals to the curiosity and fears of men. And that it may be seen that the Christian testimonies against these enchantments were not of the same nature with them, that they did not depend upon the use of charms or cabalistical words, the story of the Jewish youths who tried to imitate Paul and practise his abjuration, is related in connection with the planting of the Church in Ephesus. It was no sham battle with the powers of evil that Paul was waging. He had not a new scheme of acting upon the nerves of weak women, or the consciences of evil men, but the power of making the one reasonable and the other pure.

Next, it is in Ephesus, as these announcements might prepare us to expect, that idolatry becomes first clearly aware what a new foe it has to encounter. Nowhere else do we hear of any tumult at all resembling that which was raised by Demetrius and his craftsmen. The historian dwells upon it at unusual length, as if to make us aware both of its singularity at that time, and of its importance as a type of events which would occur afterwards. There was, as we have heard already, a powerful colony of Jews in Ephesus, who had of course stood entirely aloof from the worship of Diana, yet had occasioned no alarm to those who

were interested in upholding it. Alexander probably appeared in the theatre at Ephesus to assert the innocence of his countrymen, and to vindicate them from suspicion of the least sympathy with the new sect. St. Paul, as the town-clerk testified for him, had not transgressed the respect which was due to the religion of the country, had spoken no disrespectful words of the goddess or the temple; as far as association with heathens went, he had of course been far less exclusive than the elder Jews. It was precisely in this freedom from exclusiveness that the peril to the craft lay. If a society of Jews and Gentiles recognizing no divisions and barriers was possible, idolatry was hastening to its end. Demetrius had sagacity to see it; catholicism, not Judaism, would cause the silver shrines to be an unmarketable article.

We have here a number of hints which I think may give us a clue to the object and connection of this most memorable epistle. Here, if anywhere, we may expect to find the ground of a spiritual society which has a deeper foundation than the Jewish calling or covenant, which has its foundations in the nature of God Himself, which explains and supports all human relationships, which has all spiritual enemies to fight with, set forth less controversially and dogmatically than in the Epistle to the Galatians, with less allusion to Judaical opposers, with more direct reference to mankind and to the universe. All that St. Paul has taught and borne in this city, its own position as one of the great emporiums of the world, I would add, those fears respecting future disturbers of that Church which he could not dismiss from his mind when he was giving his affectionate benediction to the elders of it at Miletus,—all these thoughts must have been with him when he wrote, deepened by reflections which came to him in his prison hours, on the relation in which the little band in Ephesus stood to the whole family in earth and heaven, and to the powers of darkness which were striving with it, but should not prevail against it.

Though there is so much in the opening passage of this Epistle respecting adoption, redemption, the forgiveness of sins, the main subject of it is certainly not to be sought for in these

words. As little can it be said that the sin or fall of man is the starting-point of the Apostle, and that having laid the foundation of his divinity in this, he proceeds to the remedy. The doctrine of the rapturous sentence, which is not merely the exordium to the letter, but the enunciation of its design, is, in the strictest sense of the word, supralapsarian. The Apostle thanks "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, because he has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ, even as He chose us out in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." Here, as the Predestinarian school rightly assures us, is the assertion of a divine purpose which was to be executed in time, but which was not formed in time, which cannot be contemplated in reference to it and under its conditions. And they cannot be wrong in saying that the rest of the Epistle is unintelligible if the divine purpose, the Eternal Order, of which the Apostle speaks almost in the first words of it, is forgotten, or merged in any of the acts or events by which it was realized; or if the knowledge of that which was before all worlds—of the Divine Mind, which can be affected by no accidents, which can suffer no change—is not contemplated as the great reward and fruition which the Apostle is holding out to his converts and the whole Church. Most heartily and inwardly do I assent to all these positions, and desire to show how free they are from the moral dangers which have been sometimes imputed to them by Arminian divines, how little they need to be restrained and qualified; rather how much necessity there is for expanding them beyond the limitations which the Calvinistical writers have imposed upon them.

The satisfactory answer to the charge of immorality lies, as the truest and devoutest Predestinarians have again and again alleged, in the effect which the divine Election is said to produce, "That we may be holy and without blame before Him in love." They have scarcely done full justice to their own argument, for they have, at least many of them have—merely asserted that the Apostle never contemplates the end of happiness except through the means of holiness. But I see nothing about holiness and

blamelessness being means to an end. There is indeed a higher object contemplated than any which can be fulfilled by any condition of mind and character in particular members of the Church, or in the whole Church. All is said to be to the praise of the glory of His grace. All is tending to the great result of gathering together all things in Christ as a Head, whether things in heaven, or things in earth. But so far as those are concerned whom the Apostle includes in the word "us," the being holy and without blame is treated as the highest blessing of which they can be inheritors. If the Election in Christ has this one end, how can it be injurious to the inner life or outward acts of men that they should believe themselves the objects of such an Election? The danger is evidently that they should *not* suppose themselves the objects of it; that they should think God has not intended them to be holy, or has not given them the means of becoming so. Terrible danger certainly lies in that belief to every one who entertains it; experience shows how terrible it is. If we do any thing whatsoever to strengthen or authorize it in the heart of any man whatsoever, we are accessories in making him unholy and evil. But that is not all we do. If we give ourselves credit for belonging to the class in which we do not include him, or in which we have tempted him not to include himself, we have put own Election on a new ground. It is no longer that God, being holy, wishes the creature He has made in His image to be like Him. It is that being Almighty He has been able to decree that certain persons, of whom I am one, shall have certain spiritual and divine blessings. I call them spiritual and divine; but do I mean what I say? A spiritual and divine blessing is to be a partaker of the character which I account most spiritual and divine. God, as I have represented Him to myself, is not one who has a Will to all good, who merely aims at what is good, but is a Great Power, who can do what He likes. I may resemble such a Being:—it is too probable that within my own sphere I shall try to resemble Him. But this cannot be my ultimate object. It must be to get something from Him. His Will, on which I rest, must be the Will to con-

fer on me certain tangible benefits, defined by my own particular taste, from which other men are excluded, or to give me an exemption from certain penalties in which other men are involved. The spiritual blessing and the spiritual curse alike vanish upon this hypothesis. The old phrases remain; but a new signification has been given to them. The good man who has found sin to be his misery, the knowledge of God his blessing, is not aware of the transformation. He uses the language he received from godly forefathers in the sense which their practice, or his own experience, taught was the simple and natural one. But how does he writhe and groan at the discovery that words of life to him have become words of death to those who seem most passionately to adopt them, and of death also to some—evidently more honest, less self-deceivers—who cast them indignantly aside. This is what I mean by saying that the Calvinistical theory requires not to be diluted or mitigated, but unfolded; that its poison lies not in the breadth, but in the narrowness of its assertions; that it becomes mischievous when it becomes self-contradictory.

How great this contradiction is, will appear, I think, as we proceed to examine St. Paul's statement in this Epistle, and especially those words which the Calvinistical school have borrowed from him. "He hath chosen out" (ἐξελέξατο), "having predestinated" (προορίσας), are both evidently most vital words in the Apostle's introduction; their importance cannot be overrated; they deserve the most careful examination. The modern Calvinist seems to take it for granted that the first of these expressions must denote the choosing out some from a ruined mass, or majority. Yet there is no illusion to ruin, or to a majority. The Election is said to be "before the foundation of the world;" not only before the world suffered any loss or fall, but before it had been called into existence. "Oh! but there was, of course, a foresight of this loss and fall." You assume that there was; first, because you confound the words ἐξελέξατο and προώρισε, whereas St. Paul carefully distinguishes them, appropriating each to a use of its own; secondly, because

the expression, "chosen us out in Him," suggests to you the time when Christ came in the flesh. Supposing you did not mix the notion of His appearance with what is here said of Him, would it be necessary for you to look upon this election as in any sense a *foresight?* Would not you then be led to think of an Eternal Son of God, one with His Father before all worlds? And would not this election be really what the Calvinists say it is, not in time, but in the strictest sense, in Eternity? Adopt that explanation of the text, or reject it, as you please; but it cannot surprise you that as I have been tracing the revelation of such an Eternal Son of God through all the Gospels which record the acts of Jesus on earth, through all the Epistles which speak of Him as ascended into heaven, I should at once recognize this announcement of Him as most Pauline, most consistent with all the New Testament oracles. "But why 'elected?' why not 'constituted,' or some phrase of that kind?" Perhaps we may find that phrase, and equivalent phrases, occurring frequently and very significantly in this Epistle, and in others which we have considered already, or may consider hereafter. But the expression, "He hath chosen out," cannot be dispensed with; no other can exactly supply its place. The participle, "constituted," if not qualified or interpreted by this, might lead us to think of the order of an involuntary earth which cannot depart from its law, though it may need a quickening, renewing power at every moment to make it bring forth and bud according to that law. The Apostle carries us into the "heavenlies"—(not the "heavenly places," as our translators render it, so perverting the idea of a sentence from which place and time are carefully excluded)—into a region of voluntary beings, of spirits, standing by a spiritual law, capable of a spiritual blessing. But that spiritual law must be one of allegiance or affiance to God; the spiritual or heavenly blessing must be that of being subject to His Will or choice. The character of that Will or choice, the certainty and security of it because it is the Will or choice of one who is Righteous, does not affect in the least the nature of the tenure. A subject Will must be

chosen and upheld by the higher Will; it stands by His knowledge or apprehension of it. This principle is asserted in the Epistle to the Romans, assumed in every Epistle, but is nowhere brought out with so much distinctness and fulness as here.

If election, according to St. Paul, has just as much, and just as little, to do with foresight or pre-ordination, as creation has, how does the participle, "having predestinated," come in? Connect it with the word which follows it, and you see at once. Having predestinated us to the adoption of sons (υἱοθεσία). What the force of *this* expression is we have ascertained from the Epistle to the Galatians. St. Paul follows the analogy of the Roman custom strictly. It takes place when one who is already a son really is acknowledged as such by his father, and is emancipated from the bondage and pupillage to which he has been subject during his infancy. God having chosen us in His Son before the foundation of the world, designed to declare this election, to show what we are by manifesting Him. Then we hear for the first time, in connection with this adoption, of the redemption and remission of transgressions. The sons, being claimed, are delivered from their servitude to masters, whether such as the Father has appointed over them, or such as they have chosen for themselves—rightful schoolmasters or illegitimate usurpers. The sons having broken the laws of their Father's house—whether those laws have been openly and formally made known to them, or only revealed to them in their hearts and conscience—must have a forgiveness or release of their offences. To omit these wonderful acts of redemption and amnesty would be to fail in explaining how the original and eternal purpose of the Father is accomplished—how it is brought to bear upon the conditions of human creatures. But the Apostle does not linger upon these acts. He does not investigate their nature and operation, but crowds them rapidly together, fearful lest the main subject of his thanksgiving and of his teaching on this occasion should be forgotten in any of its most precious and mysterious details.

It would indeed amply repay the longest study to examine the order in which these details are introduced, in what relation they stand to each other, how they are all referred to one ground, the good pleasure of His Will, and to one end, the gathering up all things in Christ; the divine Wisdom and Prudence devising them and making them conduce to this object—not suddenly but gradually revealing the mystery of His Will. But however desirable the minute investigation is after the road has been travelled frequently, the reader must allow the Apostle to carry him along at his own speed on his own wings, if he would know any thing of the height from which he is descending and to which he is returning.

It will seem to some that the great question of all, in these early sentences and in the epistle generally, cannot be settled unless we can determine who are included in the word "us," which St. Paul uses in the third verse and so often afterwards. I confess that I do not feel the least solicitude on this point. If the pronoun was in the dual number or in the singular I should be content. If St. Paul had been the only person in the world who had been brought to believe in the true God—to believe that He was not such a God as the chief priests of the heathens or of the Jews took him to be, and that His only-begotten Son is the Centre of all things in heaven and earth, in whom they would be gathered up, he must give thanks to God for having imparted that knowledge to him, for having chosen him in Christ that he might be holy and blameless. He could not dare to deny that calling, whether he was walking worthy of it or no; God would rebuke him in his conscience if he said, "Thou has not called me and chosen me to be holy." Supposing then he and "those who first hoped in Christ" formed the most insignificant section in the world, he could not help feeling that they represented the true condition of humanity, the purpose and will of God concerning it. For he had called them to be sons. How? St. Paul says, by causing "His Son to be made of a woman, made under the law." Christ becoming a man, subjecting Himself to the actual conditions of suffering and dying man, *so* claims us to

be sons. If he took upon him not the nature of Paul or James, but of men, He claimed not Paul or James but men to be his sons. And since, according to the doctrine of the chapter, the adoption to Sonship on earth corresponds to the election in the heavenlies, cannot be more extensive than that, it must follow that what St. Paul asserts on behalf of himself and the little band of those who had turned to God and believed in Christ, was a share in the privileges of humanity as that is created elected, known by God in Christ. For the original purpose before the foundation of the world must be that of which Adam's sin and the sin of every descendant of Adam is the contravention and denial ; every man trying to stand by himself, and not to stand upon God's election, is on a fallen, rebellious, false ground ; every man claiming the privilege of God's election, now manifested to all in Christ, affirms that neither Adam's sin, nor all the sin of the world, has been able to defeat the design of the Creator.

The Apostle therefore can pass, without the least diffidence or hesitation, from "us" who have first hoped in Christ, to "you" who have heard the word of truth, and believed the Gospel of your salvation. The word of truth was, that God had sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons. The Gospel of their salvation was, that Christ had redeemed them from a curse and bondage, and brought them into His body of which He was the head. This word of truth, this Gospel, had been preached to them *before* they believed it. They had believed it in consequence of the preaching ; their belief therefore did not confine it to them. But having believed, they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. That Spirit was the pledge and assurance that they were partakers of that adoption which was proclaimed to man in Christ the Son of God and the Son of Man, of that Redemption which He had procured for men by encountering their tyrants—Death, the grave, hell, the spirit of evil. And this same Spirit was the earnest of an inheritance into which they should enter when He who had purchased them should come to claim them as His.

St. Paul is certain that they have believed what they had a right to believe, what was true for them, and for those who did not believe it. And he has no doubt that the Spirit of Truth—that Spirit who had been mocked and parodied by the spirits of which the enchanters boasted, those which were spoken of in the curious books they had burnt—was with them, binding them together in one, prompting them to love and good works. He has therefore ground for continual thanksgiving on their behalf. But he has a motive also to continual prayer, that they may have an ever-fresh and increasing wisdom and revelation—illuminated eyes in their hearts, so that they may know what their calling means, what the hope of it is, what the wealth of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints is ; what the surpassing magnitude of his power is towards those who are believing in it, that belief itself being the effect of the energizing of this power. We sink at first under the weight of this language ; the reader may be tempted to cry out with Festus, " Thou art beside thyself, Paul ! " But if he has that kind of madness which the ancients identified with the highest inspiration, it is compatible with the most entire practical soberness. The only hope that the Ephesians would be preserved from the fanaticism and inebriation which the dealers in magic were propagating was, that they should confess themselves to be under the guidance of a Spirit in the strictest sense familiar, but awful, one who was leading them into the apprehension of objects real as any of those with which their senses conversed, but not fluctuating—into the knowledge of the Eternal Being who had first taken knowledge of them. And St. Paul cannot think that he is preaching Christ while he is hiding from them the truth that they *have* received this Spirit, or the truth of that calling or election whereof this Spirit is the seal, or the truth of that inheritance whereof it is the earnest. For he can only measure that power which is working in each Ephesian convert, in each miserable creature of that city, into which the refuse of the earth was poured, by the power which energized in Christ when God raised Him from the dead and exalted Him on high. The mysterious operation of that

Divine Spirit who in death and the grave still united the Son of Man to the Father, who enabled him by that union to triumph over the fetters of space and time, this is not the *type* or *image* of that operation which begets faith in the most naturally sense-bound man, and raises him into union with the risen and ascended Lord ; it is the very same. St. Paul cannot separate them ; if he did, the believer might fancy that his holiness was some peculiar possession, that the Spirit had been given to him individually. He would not understand that he was only faithful, only holy, when he was lifted out of himself, when he was acknowledging himself the member of a living body, united to a living Head, that body being the fulness of Him that filleth all in all, of Him to whom every lordship, and principality, and power, in this age and in the age to come, is subjected.

Christ being then proclaimed as the Head and reconciler of the two worlds, as the fulfiller of God's original purpose and election to those who had fallen from it, he can speak to the Ephesians as men who, being dead in trespasses, God had quickened with Christ. The words which are interposed between the accusative and its verb help wonderfully to illustrate the meaning of the Apostle, and show what is the thought which has possession of him. The Ephesians were walking according to the course (*αἰῶνα*) of this world ; they were following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is energizing in the children of disobedience, among whom the Apostle declares that he himself, and all his Christian brethren, Jews or Gentiles, had once their conversation (*ἀνεστράφημεν*), doing the inclinations of the flesh, and of the thoughts of the mind (*διανοιῶν*), and were by nature the children of impulse (*ὀργῆς*) like others. This language I apprehend shows us from what he believes Christ had redeemed or emancipated them. It was a bondage of the will. The will was enslaved to nature ; it looked upon itself as belonging to the outside world, as chained to fate or necessity. It was actually so chained, because a spirit of unbelief and disobedience had got the mastery of it, because it had exercised its awful prerogative of choice by submitting to a tyrant who com-

pelled it to fulfil his behests. The careless reader thinks that St. Paul is accumulating clauses and epithets unnecessarily, to describe the character of this bondage ; that we should have understood the subject better if he had chosen any one of his different forms of expression ; that there must be tautology in them, if there is not contradiction. But the more we are acquainted with the efforts of philosophers to formalize the facts which exhibit the liberty and servitude of man—the proofs that he has a will while he is yoked to the car of fate—the more we have known of the contradictions in ourselves to which these experiments of theirs correspond—the more shall we appreciate the worth and the inspiration of this language, which sets forth the case as it is, with all its perplexities and anomalies ; which shows whence those anomalies and perplexities proceed, how frightful they needs must be when a spirit falls under that which is sensual and hugs its fetters ; how impossible it is to find any way out of them, if we will not recognize the existence of a disobedient Spirit, if we will not believe that this Spirit is at war with God as well as man, and that God by claiming men as his sons declares his yoke to be broken.

I shall not enter into the questions which this passage suggests respecting the "wishes or inclinations of the flesh or the thoughts," because I apprehend the Epistle to the Romans determines the sense of those words, which sense is strictly applicable here. Nor shall I justify my deviation from the usual rendering of the word ὀργὴ (wrath, anger). It must justify itself if it is good for any thing and consistent with the context ; otherwise let the old translation abide, to which I have no objection, except that it seems to me irrelevant, and to presume an ellipsis, which we should avoid when we can. What I do wish the reader to remark very carefully, and I should be sorry if any mere accidents of the passage detained him from the observation, is the use of the three compounds συνεζωοποίησεν (has co-vivified), συνήγειρεν (has co-raised), and συνεκάθισεν (has co-seated)—quickened together with, raised together with, set down together with. The idea which is indicated by these verbs is that which it seems

the design of the Epistle to develope. The quickening, raising, ascending, are declared to have taken place already. The Apostle does not say this by a bold figure of speech. He cannot speak otherwise if he is to be scientifically accurate, if he is to lay any foundation for practical faith and obedience. The clause which follows, "that he may show forth to the ages that are coming on, the surpassing wealth of his grace in his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus," connects the past revelation with the future, the completed manifestation of God's love in Christ, and of man's state as redeemed in Him, with the perpetually new and growing discovery of that love and that state by all the experiences of the universe, even by all the experiences of men's rebellion.

For he continues, By this grace—the grace that is to be shown forth in all coming æons—ye have been saved, completely saved out of the hands of the tyrant ; completely restored to your spiritual estate as sons. It is God's grace which has delivered your wills. And you claim your salvation, your freedom, by believing in your Saviour. Yet even this—this act of faith—does not come forth from you ; it is God's gift. For we are redeemed that we may carry out the divine purpose in our creation. We are created to good works, which God hath before ordained that we should work in them. Our wills are in their true restored state, when responding, conforming to His will ; so they become productive of good deeds.

The passage which follows is eminently Pauline. He addresses the Gentiles as having been fleshly, given up to their own fleshly notions and appetites, and to fleshly gods, and therefore as *really* uncircumcised, but as receiving the name uncircumcised, because they wanted the fleshly sign of a spiritual calling which their Jewish neighbors possessed. He reminds them that their misery was not *this*,—that they wanted the sign, —but that they were without Christ—not acquainted with the true Lord of their spirits, alienated from the polity of Israel, which existed to testify of Him and of His mysterious dominion ; strangers to those Covenants of Promise which spoke of God's

election of men to be his servants and people; not having hope of the future, rather having a continual dread of it; without God therefore in the world which He had made,—in the midst of His own order,—however many *gods* they might fashion out of that world. He calls upon them to remember and believe that they, being in this condition, being so far from God, so far from any divine fellowship or polity, had become nigh in Christ, nigh to God, nigh to each other, and to those Jews who seemed divided by such hopeless barriers from them. The blood of Christ—that blood which He by the Eternal Spirit had poured forth—was the quickening life-blood of the whole body, removing whatever had kept the different parts of it divided from each other. For He is our peace, who hath made both races, the circumcised and the uncircumcised, one; having dissolved in Himself the middle wall of partition between them—having annulled the actual enmity between them, which arose from their occupying a different religious position, as well as the divine decree, which seemed to declare; "These are spiritual, these are carnal;" that he might create the two in Him one new man, one common humanity, making reconciliation between them, in virtue of the higher reconciliation which he had made between both and God; in virtue of his having slain in His body on the Cross that deeper and more dreadful enmity between the distrustful rebelling creature and the loving, self-sacrificing Creator. And having accomplished His work, He proclaimed His great covenant of peace between heaven and earth, to those who were far off from any spiritual apprehensions and worship, and to those whom God had brought nigh to Himself by His calling and education. A Gospel of peace indeed, for through Him we both have access to the same Father by the same Spirit. So then, he concludes, you are not strangers, newly admitted to visit the divine city,—like the chance comers for purposes of trade to Ephesus,—or like those who have a sojourn or quarter provided them in its outskirts. You are citizens of this divine city, which includes in it all the holy men of all ages. You belong to God's own household and family. You have been established upon the very

foundation on which Prophets and Apostles stood and stand. Christ is the Corner Stone who holds them and you together. In Him the whole building fitly framed together shall grow to a holy temple in the Lord ; in Him you have been built together, —your whole Church, all its members,—for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Every one must be conscious of an overflowing fulness in the style of this Epistle, as if the Apostle's mind could not contain the thoughts that were at work in him, as if each one that he uttered had a luminous train before it and behind it, from which it could not disengage itself. Nowhere does this sequence of thoughts appear to be more disturbed, according to ordinary rules of arrangement, than in the passage immediately following the one of which I have just spoken ; nowhere is there a stricter order, one which more justifies itself to the higher reason. It is in this passage that one seems to discover the subject of the Apostle's elaborate composition, the centre of its harmony. An unhappy mistake of our translators, in the sixth verse of the third chapter, has, I think, prevented us from feeling how true this is ; how much light is thrown all around the letter from that revelation which the Apostle speaks of here, as not made to former ages, but as now made to Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit. We read "that the Gentiles *should be* fellow-heirs and of the same body." How "should be?" Was not the Apostle the messenger of a reconciliation which *had been* effected, of a middle wall which *had been* broken down? Whatever is the meaning of the Apostle, this cannot be his meaning. He, the Apostle of the Gentiles, cannot be telling them of a blessing which was to come upon them hereafter. He might look forward amidst sorrow and despondency, when ready to be accursed from Christ for his brethren's sake, to a time when all Israel should be saved. But he was the herald of a gift which had been bestowed upon the Gentiles, he invited them to enter the fold. On what ground? Because it had been shown him that the Gentiles *are* fellow-heirs and of the same body. Beginning from that highest ground before the Fall, before the Creation, he had seen God

creating all things in Christ, God purposing to gather up all things in Christ, men standing only in virtue of God's election of them in Christ. So the truth dawned upon him, that all men, of whatever race or tongue, do constitute one body in Him ; that out of Him, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, they must be divided ; since in Him, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, they are one, by the law of their creation, and become actually one, when they believe that law and submit to it.

Here was the foundation of a Gospel, *the* Gospel with which St. Paul was entrusted ; good news to men, not of something which was coming to them, but of their actual state, of that state which belongs to them, but which they do not recognize. The grace was given to him that he should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. He desired to make all *see* (so we render φωτίσαι, and I do not perceive how we could render it better) what is the economy of the mystery that has been hidden from the ages in God, who hath created all things. That truth of man's condition which had been unveiling itself in proportion as God had unveiled Himself to man, that truth had now become apprehensible by all creatures. They might be told of it, they might know it. And the effect of this revelation was not to be measured by the number of persons who might receive it then or in any after age, among Jews or Gentiles, among any inhabitants of this planet. The revelation of God's love in Christ, of Christ's incarnation, and sacrifice, and resurrection, of the victory over fallen and rebellious wills, was a revelation to the whole universe, to the principalities and powers in heavenly places. The Church, however small its numbers, however insignificant its members, declared to them the manifold wisdom of God, according to the fore-arrangement of the ages which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Such a flight as this might, one would have thought, have

* It does not seem to me that the words "eternal purpose which He purposed" are sufficiently literal, or convey the sense of the original. Surely there is an idea of the arrangement or fore-ordination of ages and periods which this expression fails to impart to us.

tempted the Apostle to forget the poor humble sinful creatures to whom he had been writing. Their well-being might have been lost sight of in the glory of principalities and powers. But it is not so. He cannot even conclude his sentence without saying, "in whom *we* have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him." And this confidence and this faith remind the Apostle of all the discipline by which he has been led into them—of those tribulations which had often shaken the faith of his converts, though it was to them he owed his power of entering into their sufferings, and his apprehension of the glory of which they were inheritors together.

I believe that there was in the Apostle's mind at this time, a sense of opposites, of the union of weakness and strength, of tribulation and glory, of all that had been and all that was to be, of the absolute love of God, of the discovery of that love to man in the Mediator, of the working of that love in man through the Spirit, of the fellowship of the poorest creature of flesh and blood on earth with the spirits in Heaven, of a canopy of love above and of an abyss of love beneath compassing the whole creation, which could only find its expression in a prayer.

And this is the prayer:—"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

Our translators have taken the whole of the third chapter as a parenthesis. With much more justification from the Apostle's words (τούτου χάριν being at the beginning both of the first and

of the fourteenth verse), Lachmann terminates the parenthesis at the beginning of the prayer. There is no reason why St. Paul should not repeat the expression so familiar to him, "the prisoner in the Lord," without having any conscious reference to the same phrase as it stands in the beginning of a passage occurring so long before. What follows arises out of the revelation which he has spoken of and the supplication which was based upon it. He beseeches them to walk worthy of the calling wherewith they had been called,—that calling which had carried out the purpose of God before the worlds were,—that calling of men who had been hostile to each other in form and in spirit,—whom God himself seemed to have divided,—to be one body, to have one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. They were to remember that these were the blessings which had been bestowed upon them, blessings which it would require a strenuous *endeavor* to preserve. The danger lay in their thinking that they were to create a state for themselves, instead of accepting one and abiding in it. Lowliness of mind, gentleness, long-suffering, forbearance—qualities apparently negative rather than positive, were the qualities that were demanded of them that they might enter into the rich inheritance which had been freely bestowed upon them.

But these blessings were common to all. The one Lord and one faith were for the Church, for the whole body. The Apostle here, as in the Epistle to the Corinthians, is careful to show that each individual has also his own gift. He who had ascended on high, as the emancipator of man from all his bondage,—an ascent implying a previous descent, a claim to possess the very lowest corners of the earth, a victory over the whole universe—He had bestowed these gifts exactly in their due measure and proportion. He had given apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers; but each with a view to the edification and consolidation of the whole body. Each was a step to the great end which would be accomplished when all should meet together in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God,

when all the scattered portions of humanity should be gathered into the perfect Man, should reach the full stature of the Christ. These gifts and ministries were contributing to educate those who received them out of the state of infancy into this manhood; out of the condition in which they were the sports of every chance current of doctrine,—liable to be carried round and round in endless circles of error by the craft and sleights of deceitful men,—into a condition of steadfast love, of steadfast truth in act and speech, but a steadfastness which implies perpetual growth into Him who is the Head of the body; into Him from whom the body derives all its form and compactness, as well as a continual renewal of its vital energy, the life of each part ever conducing to the life of the whole.

In this flight or rapture St. Paul has never lost sight of his original principle, that God is regenerating and reconstituting humanity in Christ according to that original purpose which he had purposed before the worlds were. Nor does he ever lose sight of the practical result of this divine purpose to the Ephesians particularly, and to the Gentiles generally. All the exhortations which follow to the very end of the Epistle assume as their groundwork that the true state of man, and consequently *their* state, is now revealed in Christ; that a divine illumination was all about them and within them; and that if they did not live in it, if their lives were not clear and orderly, it was because they were shutting their eyes.

The next passage brings out with great clearness and power the Apostle's idea of the distinction between the new and old man. He does not for a moment admit that the Gentiles had not a light near them, that there was not a life of God within them. But he speaks of their minds being darkened, of their being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them. He accounts for that ignorance by the hardening of the heart, which hardening was itself the effect of the loss of feeling that comes when men give themselves over to lasciviousness—to the working of uncleanness with greediness. On the other hand, he does not allow the baptized Ephesians to think

that the evil which had been in them in former days was not in them still, that they were not likely to walk as the other Gentiles walked. Only they need not so walk. They had been taught of the Christ, the true Light, the true Lord of their spirits. They had heard of him and been taught in Him as the truth is in Jesus. In other words, they had heard how that divine life of God had been fully exhibited in the acts of a man. They might know by what He was, that which He would have them to be. They might put off the old man, the one with whom they had had their converse hitherto, that old man that was corrupt by following after deceitful lusts. They might be renewed in the spirit of their mind, and put upon them the new man, that man who was created after God in righteousness and holiness of truth. Thus then the new Man was that true and divine Man with whom their spirits had to do, of whom their consciences testified till they had drowned them in lusts, who had now revealed Himself to and in man as his righteous Lord, whose righteousness the man who trusted in it and rejoiced in it, could claim as his own.

There being this righteousness, a righteousness for them one and all, not as separate creatures, but as members of a body, St. Paul could bid them speak truth every one with his neighbor, could bid them keep the anger which he would not have them stifle, under such government that they should not injure one another. He could bid the robber become the laborer and the giver, and the foul and filthy speaker utter gracious and healthful words. All these were precepts of plain reason, the justice of which every heathen would acknowledge. But the ground of them lay in that righteous constitution for man, which had been revealed in Christ, and in that Holy Spirit with which He had sealed them against the day when He should redeem them and claim them as His. The Apostle had already spoken to the Ephesians of this sealing and redemption. The goods which lay on their quay in bond with the owner's mark upon them, for which he had paid his earnest-money, for which he would certainly pay the full price and take them into his own possession,

suggested the analogy. It is the nature of the seal upon which he dwells here. The Owner's own Spirit, the Spirit of holiness and love, had been bestowed upon them. This was the earnest-money, this was the sign to whom they belonged. Let them remember that it was a Person, a loving Person who was dwelling with them, and that all bitterness and wrath and anger and violence were more grievous to Him than they could be to the most tender and sensitive of friends. Let them remember that gentleness, compassion, forgiveness, were the qualities which He was seeking to work in them. For these were what God had manifested to be His own nature when in Christ He had forgiven them. Having this Spirit, this seal of their adoption, they might be imitators of God as His own beloved children. They could walk in love, even as Christ loved them, who gave Himself for them, a fragrant offering and sacrifice. They might put away fornication and uncleanness and covetousness. They might substitute thankfulness for grovelling and foolish talking. For surely they knew that the fornicator, the unclean man, and the extortioner, had no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. These were the habits of mind which of necessity cut them off from the divine fellowship. Whatever foolish persons might tell them, this was the misery they had escaped, this was the wrath of God which was resting on the children of disobedience. To be brought out of these was their blessedness and their salvation. Let them not then claim fellowship with these. They knew what it was to be in that darkness of which he had spoken. Light was now shining about them, the light which was in the Lord. Oh let them walk as children of the light. Light is fruitful; fruitful in goodness, righteousness, truth. Let them discern and test by it, what is acceptable to the Lord. Darkness is unfruitful. Let them have no fellowship with its works, let them rather lay them bare and bring them to the light. The acts which court secrecy it is shameful even to speak of. But all things are proved and manifested by the light; manifestation is the very sign and characteristic of light. And that light is about the dullest sleeper, and a voice is ever speaking to

him saying, "Awake, and arise out of the habitations of the dead, and the Christ will illuminate thee." Therefore if there is this darkness and this light about you, walk carefully, not as fools, who know not whither they are going, but as wise men seize each opportunity, rescue it from the evil days. Keep your understandings free to understand what the will of the Lord is, not yielding to sottishness, but being filled with the Spirit, keeping up merry musical hearts, singing and making melody to the Lord within, being musical also in your intercourse with each other, keeping up a tone of thankfulness for all things to God, in the Name of Him in whom He is reconciled to us, submitting yourselves also one to another in His Name who came to be the servant of all.

On this same ground he rests all human relationships. Wives must be submissive to their own husbands as to the Lord, because the man is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church. The high and universal order is manifested in the individual order; the subjection of the Church to Christ involves the subjection of the wives to the husbands. But as He being the Head, is the Saviour of the whole body, as He loved the Church and gave Himself for it, in order that having cleansed it He might sanctify it, in order that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church; so the love of the husband should go forth towards his wife with a like purifying and elevating influence. He should feel her part of himself, should love her and cherish her as his own body, even as Christ loves the Church because we are members of His body. Here is the ground for that original precept, that a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and that they should be one flesh. The mystery no doubt is a very great and deep one. It is that very mystery of Christ's relationship to humanity which he had been speaking of before, which the former ages had not known, which was now made manifest. But each husband and wife might enter more and more into this mystery by carrying it out in their love and reverence to each other.

All other relations have the same foundation. The fifth com-

mandment, with its blessing and promise of endurance upon the land, was not a mere command. There was a righteousness at the root of it. And children obeying their parents, and parents not provoking their children, but bringing them up and representing to them in their own acts the education and discipline of the Lord, were also entering into this mystery, carrying out the meaning of this revelation.

In every case it is a mutual relationship which is unfolded. The servant is to be obedient to the master in simplicity of heart, feeling himself the servant of Christ, confessing the will of God, certain that the Lord is no respecter of persons. The masters are to do the same things to them, to forbear threatening, to be sure that they have a Master in Heaven, and to be sure that He will not treat them better than their slaves.

Here is the true divine and human republic in which all the universality and spirituality of the Platonical republic is united with the reverence for relationships which Aristotle perceived to be at the basis of every sound polity, but which he could not reconcile with the other condition of it. In the God-Man, in Him in whom all things were created, in whom men were chosen, in Him who was born of the Virgin and was subject to her, who had brothers and friends, who loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, St. Paul found the eternal centre round which all the different portions of human society are moving in their different orbits, who keeps them from ever becoming discordant or from disturbing the unity of the system.

Therefore what remained was that the Ephesians should be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Their work was not to win a position, but to maintain one which had been given them. And that was no holiday task. It was not a battle with flesh and blood. All the powers of spiritual evil were gathered against them; they were assaulting their spirits on the right and on the left. They needed a spiritual armor to withstand these enemies. They would have to withstand in the evil day, and when they had done all that they could do, still their task was to stand. Let them stand then on that ground that had

been won for them, girded with truth about their loins, with Christ's truth for their breastplate, with Christ's Gospel of peace for the sandals to their feet, with faith as a shield to the whole body, with the confidence of salvation for their helmet, with the Spirit's sword, the word of God, to strike down the enemy. And if they wished to know how they were to wear this armor, how they were to exercise these weapons of defence, how each man was to fight at once for himself and for his neighbor; then let them pray with all prayer and supplication in the spirit; let there be watchfulness and perseverance in their supplication for all saints, and among them for him who needed the exhortations which he was addressing to them for himself, who wanted so much more of spiritual freedom and courage, because, as far as his body was concerned, he was an ambassador in bonds. But bondman or freeman, he could wish to all the brethren peace and love with faith. It was not a barren wish; for the peace and the love and the faith came not from him, but from the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. And when they loved that Lord in sincerity, the grace to which their love was only the response, would come forth richly and freely upon them all.

EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

As Philippi was the city in which St. Paul made his first assault upon Europe, it must always have a special interest for the western reader. There is much in the recollection that the neighborhood was the scene for the last struggle for the old Roman republic,—that there the great obstacle was removed to the establishment of that empire with which the Christian kingdom was to measure its strength,—which increases this interest. It

is deepened and brought into direct connection with the life of the Apostle by the narrative in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. All the incidents in that chapter have much more than a mere sentimental worth. They are memorable points in church-history. The prayer by the river-side is the only direct allusion to Jewish worship in the narrative, and it suggests thoughts of a different kind from those which we derive from the ordinary references to the synagogue. Nothing in the words determine whether Lydia was a Jew by birth, or a proselyte. But the words, "she worshipped God," are probably decisive that she was not a heathen. The damsel with the spirit of divination is another of those instances which we meet with everywhere, of the prevalence of magic and enchantment, in all parts of the Empire, and of the trading purposes to which it was turned. The grief of Paul at her apparent addiction to his doctrine is a proof how naturally the Apostolic teaching respecting the Spirit presented itself as *the* characteristically Christian teaching, how quickly the counterfeit doctrine claimed affinity with it, how much St. Paul felt it was his main duty to exhibit one as the great contrast to the other. Then comes the interference of the Roman magistrates with this teaching; an interference caused, as it would always be, not by any dislike to it for its own sake, but from the disposition which the Romans felt to indulge all the superstitions of their subjects, and to protect so recognized and popular a business as that of the diviner. Still the complaint takes a Roman form. The customs of the city were invaded. The colonists who claimed Roman privileges could not endure the innovations and interferences of Jews. The story of the prison and the earthquake will only be explained away by those who think that the whole growth and progress of the Church was not supernatural, and that an attestation of the divine presence with those who were speaking the truth, is a departure from the order of the divine proceedings, not a vindication of it. How that outward manifestation awakened the conscience of the jailor, how the thought of deliverance, or salvation, for the first time dawned upon him, how the Apostles at once spoke to him of the Lord of

his conscience, and the Deliverer of it, we have known from our childhood, and yet the words are not the least exhausted, but should be studied again and again in connection with the whole apostolical message. Nor ought we, by any means, to forget the Apostle's vindication of his rights as a Roman citizen, and his determination to assert the law against the temporary administrators of it. His reverence for Roman law, as a part of God's order in the world, is conspicuous everywhere. We shall misunderstand his character and his work if we do not take account of it.

Though these events are very important in themselves, they are not as obviously connected with the Epistle to the Philippians as the experiences of the Apostle in Ephesus are with the Epistle to the Church in that city. It would seem as if the Philippians had been more staggered by the Apostle's imprisonment and the probable death that was awaiting him, than by any events which had happened, or were happening, in their own neighborhood. Various thoughts would have been suggested to them by his tribulation, thoughts that might have unsettled the minds of men much longer established in the faith than they were. Their shepherd was stricken ; he was in the hands of the Emperor ; but his own countrymen had been the cause of his betaking himself to Rome. He was apparently silenced by God's own decree. Many members of the Church, who were Jews, denounced him, denied that he was a true preacher of Christ, affirmed that he believed another doctrine from that of the older Apostles. Such words, reaching to the chamber where the soldier watched him, were heard also in every Church which he had founded, and must have been repeated by the Judaizers in Macedonia. One knows a little how such hints affect the minds of people living in quietness ; of what tumults, of what infidelity, they are the parents. Suppose them coming to converts who were suffering themselves from Jewish and Gentile adversaries, who had among them (strange as it may seem to those who think the early Church must have been pure because it was persecuted) careless inconsistent livers ; and we appear to have

most of the circumstances to which St. Paul refers in this letter.

Disunion was the peril of the Philippians as it was of the Corinthians; but a disunion arising less, it would appear, from intellectual causes and the spirit of faction, than from despondency. Against that tendency the whole letter seems to be directed. It is a perpetual summons to trust and hope and joy, which tribulations need not damp, to which they might be the most effectual ministers. It is evidently a leading maxim of the Apostle, which comes forth in every epistle, that trust and hope and joy are not solitary feelings, that they belong to a community, that they are nourished by mutual intercourse, that they are sustained by a common Spirit, that they have no meaning if they do not point to a common object. The specially eucharistical character of this epistle which goes through it from the beginning to the end, is always connected with exhortations to fellowship, to oneness of spirit and soul, to common work, to common sympathy. And these are not mere exhortations to do what is right and avoid what is wrong: they are grounded upon the fact, that they are united to each other, united to the Apostle himself, however far he may be away from them, in a bond which nothing can break, one which he is as able to realize in his prayers and thanksgivings while he is imprisoned at Rome, as if he were with them at Philippi. What better thing can he give thanks for than that they are brought into the same fellowship with him? What better thing can he ask for them than that they may enter into the full meaning of this fellowship? All other blessings are included in that; clearness of mind, freedom from causes of offence and from giving offence, the walking in Christ's clear light, the expectation of his perfect day.

Why should the Apostle's imprisonment discourage them? It is the means of making his gospel known in the very palace of the Cæsars. Why should the different opinions about him discourage them? Christ's name was heard, even from those who most disliked his imprisoned servant, who would have been most willing to add affliction to his bonds. Was not that a reason for

rejoicing to him and to them? Why were they to be cast down because his death might be at hand? To him to live here in the flesh was to draw life from Christ, to die was to have the gain of a fuller, richer life. He could not tell which was the best. But he did not doubt that that would be granted to him which was most profitable for them. He had little doubt that he should see them again face to face.

But what if he did not? Let them live as fellow-heirs of the inheritance which the Gospel told them of; let them stand fast in one spirit; let them struggle with one soul for the faith of the Gospel; being in nothing shaken by their adversaries; (their peace—a peace all the sweeter and more honorable because they were permitted not only to believe in Christ but to suffer for Him —would be the witness of the deliverance which God had wrought for them, and would contrast with the miserable condition of those who could never be at peace, who could only cast up mire and dirt,) and then they would be one with the Apostle, near or at a distance, fighting the battle which he was fighting. But whence was this unity to come? How could they, a set of men with so many individual temperaments, so many diverse interests, have in very deed that one mind which he had demanded of them? That one mind was given them. They were members of Christ, that is to say, of Him who being in the form of God, did not eagerly grasp at equality with God, but emptied Himself and became of no reputation, and having taken upon Him the form of a servant, and having become in the likeness of men, and having been found in fashion as a man, still further humbled Himself, having become obedient unto death, yea the death of the cross. And it was this humbled, crucified Man whom God had highly exalted, whose name was above every name, that in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things heavenly and earthly and subterranean, and every tongue should confess that Jesus is the Christ, to the glory of God the Father.

Here we find the central doctrine of the Epistle to the Philippians, as it is of all the other epistles. It is presented in the form and aspect most suited to their necessities. But it is the

same truth of the humble Jesus and the exalted Christ,—of the Son who is one with the Father, and makes himself so one with man that His mind is shown to be the very mind which belongs to man,—the only mind which can make us humble, the only mind which can keep us at one, the only mind which can make us sharers of His glory who has created us to know Him and be like Him. On this ground St. Paul bases all his after exhortations. He asks for obedience, for an obedience which did not depend on his presence or absence. He asks them to work out their salvation, salvation from all those strifes and divisions which were keeping them apart from Christ and each other, with the fear and trembling of men who know that God Himself is working in them both the will and the energetic action for His good pleasure. On this ground he can bid them do all things without murmurings and disputings. He can bid them be the blameless children of God in the midst of a crooked and distorted generation, among whom they might shine as world-lights, holding up the word of life to those who were most sunk in death; so proving that the Apostle had not run in vain or labored in vain, but had sent forth those who could hand on the torch when he ceased to run and to labor. Even if he were poured out as an offering for their sakes, he could joy and rejoice with them. Why should not they joy and rejoice with him?

Here, as everywhere, the personal mixes with the general and the universal. No sense of the spiritual fellowship and unity which he has with the Philippians in the spirit, leads him to forget his and their friends, Timothy and Epaphroditus, through whom he had communicated with them, who felt for them and suffered with them as he did. It is needless to remark, for one epistle proves it just as much as another, how all individual griefs, sicknesses, losses of estate or reputation, mingle in the Apostle's most elevated discourses, and do not lower them in the least. Here they come in with wonderful appropriateness as exhibiting the mind of Him who was the sufferer with each, who is exalted to be the Lord of all.

But the allusion to St. Paul's sorrow for the sickness of his

friend, immediately gives way to the burden of the whole letter, "Rejoice in the Lord." He has said it often to them; he must say it again. For there are dogs, evil-workers, counterfeit supporters of circumcision, who were hindering them from this joy. The true circumcision meant that they were to cut off the flesh, that their spirits might rise up and be renewed to life and freedom and joy in Christ. Paul had as many fleshly privileges as any man could have—all outward distinctions that severed him from his kind and gave him a right to boast of his national election. But he had counted all these loss and dung for the sake of Christ. For the righteousness which was in Him, the righteousness which comes upon faith, to which a man rises through faith, the righteousness which is of God Himself, he had cast away all that righteousness which is merely subjection and conformity to the law. He aspired to know Christ Himself, the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of His sufferings. He was formed in the image of His death; he longed to attain the image of the resurrection. He had not attained it, he was always pressing after it. Forgetting the things that were behind, he was always reaching upwards, desirous to lose himself, to be found in Christ, to attain the mark of the high calling of God in Christ. This was the highest object which the most perfect or initiated man could propose to himself. And yet it was the common object for the whole Church. All might have this mind. And if any felt that they were otherwise minded, they might trust God to reveal it to them.

He had told them what he was striving after. Let them strive for the same object. Let them think what he and those who most felt with him were desiring and aiming at. He knew sadly that there were others who had other aims,—low, grovelling, earthly aims, and who would too surely attain what they sought, the perdition of their moral being. But oh, let them remember that their citizenship was in the heavens, that Christ the Deliverer is there; that instead of subjecting our spirits to our bodies, we are to wait till He transforms the bódy of our humiliation into the likeness of the body of His glory, by that power whereby He is able to subdue even all things unto Himself.

Again and again the Apostle turns to individual cases and circumstances, gently alluding to any troubles or jealousies or divisions of which he had heard, while he brings the law which he has been working out to bear upon them. But as the great object of the Epistle is encouragement, the removal of despondency, he seizes the occasion to tell the Philippians what delight they had given him by the love-tokens which they had sent him again and again; the offerings which they had made, that were so acceptable to him because he was sure they were acceptable to God. He shows them how all things that were kind and gentle and venerable and lovely, whether they were exhibited imperfectly by weak human beings, or fully in the acts and manifestations of God, were dear to him, were the occupation of his thoughts, the food of his spirit. He would have them think on these things. And then the main exhortation of the Epistle would be obeyed; they would rejoice in the Lord. And the blessed effect of their inward joy would appear to all men in their evenness and moderation. They would feel that the Lord was near them. They would have no vexing cares. In prayer and supplication, never separated from thanksgiving, their requests would be made known to God. And the peace of God which surpasses all our reason would guard their hearts and their thoughts in Christ Jesus.

EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

The Acts of the Apostles give us no help in understanding the condition of the Church at Colosse. As St. Paul says that he had never seen the Christians there or in Laodicea, it was not likely that St. Luke would speak to us of either. All our infor-

mation must be obtained from the Epistle itself. It raises a question which has been much discussed in the last few years, and which is connected with the theory of Bauer respecting the Pauline epistles.

As our countryman Hammond discovered Gnosticism everywhere in the first age of the Church, and supposed that the Apostolical Epistles were mainly written to expose the dangers of it, so modern schools have been inclined to deny that there are any traces of it before the second century, and therefore to dispute the genuineness of the epistles which apparently allude to it. There is, of course, the other alternative of explaining away all such allusions as suggested by the fancy of a particular commentator. In very many cases this course is an easy one. Hammond undoubtedly strained a number of passages into consent with his theory. But the Epistle to the Colossians contains hints which cannot be got rid of. Any one acquainted with the phenomena of Gnosticism in the second century, would naturally, almost inevitably, conclude that the Apostle must be pointing at some of its doctrines and habits. And the sentences which contain these allusions cannot have slipped into the Epistle. They are part of its very substance. Exclude them, and the object of it becomes scarcely intelligible.

But does it follow from this admission, that the writer of this Epistle was acquainted with Valentinians or Carpocratians, that he makes any, even the slightest, allusion to the different forms which the Gnostical doctrine assumed when persons arose who resolutely and systematically sought to combine the Gospel with the doctrines of the Magians, or of the Alexandrian sages? I do not think that it is possible to detect any such allusion. If one reads the Epistle simply, the inference from it would be ; "no great schemes concerning divine emanations have as yet been directly blended with the lessons of the Apostles, though there is as clearly the possibility of all such schemes, though the seeds of a hundred heresies have been deposited in the soil, and the produce of them is beginning to show itself above ground."

If we admit this to be the case—and I only wish the reader to

admit it if the evidence of the Epistle itself seems to be in favor of the opinion—we can do justice to both Hammond and Bauer, and to another class of commentators different from either, who, like our Bishop Davenant, have sought and found in this Epistle the confutation of different Romish errors of doctrine and practice. Those who endeavor to apply the Apostle's teaching to his own times, are on the whole, I think, the safer, though they may be the drier guides. Yet it is impossible not to recognize a freshness and vitality in the others which seem to prove them right even when history would lead us to think them wrong. We only begin to distrust their suggestions when we find that they tie the words of Scripture to a particular case, and hinder us from applying it to other cases in which we are, in our own day, perhaps more profoundly interested. By fairly taking the Epistle to mean what it says—not reading into it the information which we derive from later sources, and yet profiting by all the experience we possess in judging of the habits and tendencies which are likely to appear in persons and societies, and to be called forth by similar circumstances,—we may, I suspect, discover in the Church at Colosse, modes of thinking and acting which will help us to understand the conditions of the Church in the second century, as well as in the middle ages, and yet which may, in some respects, have a more remarkable bearing upon our own time than either upon the one or the other. Above all, I think we shall be convinced of the thoroughly genuine and Pauline character of the Epistle; of its perfect harmony with those which we have considered already; of its possessing those distinct and local signs which we have never yet found wanting in any of the apostolical letters, and the absence of which would almost as much oblige us to reject it as the most flagrant contradictions of other parts of the New Testament.

The sophist must certainly have been a very skilful man who could contrive to throw into his imitation of St. Paul,—not his forms of speech, not the introductions to his letters, not allusions to this or that person,—but the very mind and heart of the Apostle, his passionate vehemence, the involutions of his periods,

proceeding from the multitude and variety of his thoughts, along with an order and coherency which makes itself manifest, not in spite of that involution, but by means of it. His ingenuity is still more remarkable, because he does *not* take the outside of the Apostle's mind and writings as the subject for his copy. He does not introduce phrases about justification, by which systematizers in that day, or later days, would have identified St. Paul, and convinced themselves that the document which contained them could have come from no other hand. But he at once seizes, with an intuition which does not usually belong to a thoroughly dishonest man, or to one who is interpolating for a purpose, that which we have discovered to be the very characteristic principle of the Apostle in all his letters, that which he enunciates in the letter to the Galatians, as the explanation of his conversion and of his mission to the Gentiles. "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me that I might preach Him among the Gentiles:" these words have been the key-note to his other epistles. There is none, to the different parts of which they give more sense and unity than to that which we are now considering.

The passages down to the fourteenth verse of the first chapter remind us of the Epistle to the Ephesians. The tone of thought and language is so like that a careless reader might easily suppose that he was merely about to hear a repetition of the lessons which he had been learning there. But if he reads the passage again, he will perceive omissions in it, which will at once convince him that the object is different. There are the same thanksgivings to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for faith and love of the infant Church, for the hope that is laid up for them in the heavens; the same acknowledgment of the fruitful and life-giving power which dwells in the word of the truth of the Gospel, the power which had proved its reality in others and in them; the same prayer for them, that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that they might bring forth the fruit of good works, that they might grow in the knowledge of God, that they might

have inward might for endurance and long-suffering, that they might give thanks to the Father, who had called them and fitted them for the inheritance of the saints in light, who had delivered them out of the power of darkness, and translated them into the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom they had their redemption, the forgiveness of sins. But that which constituted the peculiarity of the Epistle to the Ephesians, its beginning from the blessings which God had bestowed on them in Christ before the foundation of the world, is not to be met with here. And, as that commencement gave the character and tone to the whole epistle, we should commit the greatest possible mistake if we confounded this with it, because there were thoughts in the Apostle's mind which belonged as much to the condition of one Church as of the other.

The passage which follows brings us, I think, into the heart of this epistle, to the very subject of it, "Who is the image of the God, the unseen God: First-born of all creation. Because in Him were created all things in the heavens and upon the earth; the things seen and the things unseen, whether thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers; all things through Him and with a view to him were created. And He is before all, and all things in Him consist. And He is the head of the body, the original, first-begotten out of the dead, that He might become in all things Himself the first (or forerunner). Because in Him all the fulness was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all things unto Him, having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, being heretofore alienated and enemies in mind by evil works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and blameless and unreproved, if at least ye remain in the faith grounded and settled, and are not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which ye have heard, that which has been preached in all the creation which is under the heaven, of which I Paul have become the minister."

This passage arises most naturally out of that which has preceded it. There is no break in the sense. The first clause

which I have quoted belongs to a previous sentence. And if we attend to the phraseology we shall perceive that all has been moving onward to this declaration of Christ as *the* image of God, the ground and pattern of the visible and invisible creation, the Head of all powers and governments in the unseen world, the pattern in death as well as in life, the beginning of the old creation and the new, the Head of the Church ; its Head, because the whole Divine fulness was actually gathered up in Him ; its Head, because He has brought about an actual re-union and reconciliation of the torn fragments of humanity in Himself, and has enabled all particular men—such as the Colossians who had been severed from God by the evil which was in them—to resume their own proper place in God's order and universe.

But why does he dwell so emphatically upon the *unseen* God, and upon the things *seen and unseen*? Why is there such an accumulation of phrases to denote spiritual or angelical powers? Why does he so laboriously connect earth with heaven, the Church on earth, the local Church of the Colossians, the very men to whom he is writing, with the divine Cosmos, which includes so much more than the cosmos which physical science treats of? Why, but because there had arisen in the minds of the members of this particular Church questionings about the relation of the seen to the unseen, doubts whether the invisible God might not be manifesting Himself through a number of different subordinate agencies and ministries to man, doubts whether there was any one Person to whom they were all subjected, any one in whom God had fully revealed Himself, any one in whom man could meet Him and claim fellowship with him, any one in whom the different cycles of the world's history, as well as the different orders of creation, could really find their common end and interpretation, to whom they could all be referred. It was the very Gospel of which Paul had been made the minister, that such a person, such a centre, such a reconciler, had been revealed. It was the most natural of all doubts to ask whether this news could be true, the most comprehensive of all denials to say that it was false. All idolatry, just so far as it was idolatry,—just so

far as it was the assertion of a multitude of centres, not of one great divine and human centre,—was contending with this belief. Each particular form of that idolatry was the resisting power in some particular direction to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, because it was that which kept a certain set of men, with certain traditions, apart from other men. Judaism in like manner, when it set itself up as an exclusive religion, was of course at war with St. Paul's assertion. It put itself upon the Ethnic ground, while he maintained that the Jew was called to be a blessing to all the families of the earth. But was it not quite certain that as other tendencies of Heathenism and Judaism re-appeared in the Christian Church, and received a new character and impression from its doctrine, this, which was the characteristic and common denial of both, would in some form or other re-appear also? *What* the forms would be, a wise man might possibly guess, but could not predict. He would be nearly sure that the old idolatries must come forth in a more spiritualized character, that vulgar sensual forms would be translated into abstract forms and essences, that a number of half-gods and secondary principles would be interposed between the creature and the Creator. He might have been convinced that Jews and Gentiles would each contribute their aid in framing a new dæmonology, that the material and the spiritual would be curiously and strangely combined in it, that the different dogmas of Heathen mythology and philosophy would assert their predominance in the Churches of the lands with which they had had in past times most affinity. But with these and a multitude of more remote combinations and results, the teacher of the first age had no need directly to meddle. He did a much mightier service to the world if he pointed out the root of these tendencies, the mode in which they would try to fashion the new revelation into their likeness, and make it testify in their favor—above all, the only cure for them.

This cure lies first in that full declaration of Christ as the one centre of humanity, and the one manifestation of God which we have heard already, a Gospel not to be argued for or proved otherwise than as it proved itself by meeting and reconciling those par-

tial theories which were set up in opposition to it, as well as those intuitions and anticipations of the human spirit to each of which one of these theories had corresponded. Secondly, it consisted in the special application of this Gospel to the inferences which doctors or disciples had drawn from these theories, and to the practices which they had founded upon them; in showing that it accomplished what they were awkwardly and unsatisfactorily attempting.

One of the first inferences from the belief that wonderful mysteries concerning the invisible world had been discovered to men by Christ's appearance among them, when it was not accompanied with that full belief respecting His person and His reconciliation to which the Apostle urged them, was that they had something to do in order to complete that which He had left undone. He had gone through great tribulations and sufferings for the world, no doubt. They must go through tribulations and sufferings in order that they might attain the spiritual blessings, that they might be inheritors of the spiritual kingdom, which He had prepared for them. We need not stop to speak of the different perplexities which this opinion has caused in different ages of the Church. The student of ecclesiastical history finds them re-appearing at every step. But was there no truth in this doctrine which needed to be disengaged from some of its perilous adjuncts? Had not St. Paul said, that through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God? What was the meaning of the sufferings which he was himself called to undergo? He meets the question at once: "I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and I am filling up that which was lacking in the tribulations of Christ in my flesh for His body, which is the Church." Every one feels what bold language this is; how easily it may be quoted for the support of some of the greatest and most dangerous superstitions; in denial of Christ's finished sacrifice. But if the great object of the Apostle in the epistle where these words occur, is to declare the completeness and all-sufficiency of Christ against those who were setting Him aside and trying to bring in certain acts or exercises of their own, as a means of at-

taining heights of knowledge or excellence to which He had not brought them, we have a right to assume that these words, like all which accompany them, are used for the correction of that error. And they do I conceive correct it most effectually and in the most practical manner. For if we suppose the Apostle to mean by the sufferings of Christ, those which He endured upon the cross,—even, I say, if this should be the meaning (though it certainly does not seem to me the most simple or natural meaning), the words, "For His body's sake which is the Church," would at once strike at the root of the notion, that he was enduring tribulations in order to procure some higher rewards for himself. He could only say in that case, that he was entering into the meaning and mystery of his Master's sufferings; that, as He gave up Himself for the Church, that he might sanctify it and present it pure and glorious, so the Apostle was permitted to suffer in his slight measure and degree, in the same spirit and for the same end, an end most contrary to that which the Colossians dreamt of when they thought of supplying the deficiencies of Christ's work. But if we read the words, "the sufferings and tribulations of the Christ in my flesh," we get a sense which I believe is more in accordance with the whole passage; which avoids the possible misconstruction that there might be in the other; which equally justifies the truth that was latent in the error of the Colossians; which even more effectually confounds their error. He does not claim even the sufferings as his own. They are the sufferings of the Christ in him,—the pain and sorrow which he must go on feeling in His servant, as He felt them upon earth in that flesh which He took, from the strifes and contradictions of the world which He came to redeem, from that struggle with the powers of evil in which He and all His disciples were engaged. And this conflict of the Christ within him, was "for the sake of His Body the Church of which I have been made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which has been given me to fulfil the word of God,—the mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations, but has now been manifested to His saints; to whom God was pleased

to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery in the Gentiles, *which is Christ in you the hope of glory;* whom we proclaim, warning *every man* and teaching *every man* with all wisdom, that we may present *every man* perfect in Christ. For which end also I am laboring, striving according to His energy that is energizing in me mightily."

I think that this passage confirms the view which I have taken of the other, though that is a very small part of its value and meaning. Nearly every word points at one of those habits of mind to which the Colossians were liable, yet, without rudely attacking it, nay, while vindicating it and giving it its proper direction. The teachers who had appeared in Colosse must have spoken much of an unfathomable mystery or abyss, of a divine fulness, out of which a number of partial illuminations and manifestations had proceeded, of a perfectness or thorough initiation, which belonged to certain men who had purified themselves from the sensuality of the crowd, and had risen above the childish wisdom of the novitiate. Each of these thoughts, though pregnant with so much of Pantheism, of vagueness, of self-glorification, the Apostle appropriates and redeems. There *is* a mystery which was hid from ages and generations. But it has now been made manifest. He is sent forth to declare it in its fulness. He is to counsel and teach *every man*, that he may present every man perfect and thoroughly initiated in Christ Jesus. How can that be possible? how can the wise and the foolish be so levelled? Because the mystery which he has found in himself, which he is to declare to them, was "Christ in them the hope of glory." As it was Christ in Paul who was suffering and striving for the Church—the object of his instruction, of his suffering, of his Gospel, was to make each Gentile, each man, know that Christ was in him, the very Christ who was in his brother; therefore, that he was not to exalt himself above his brother, was not to dream of high mystical flights and raptures by which he might scale heaven, but in toiling, suffering, teaching was to enter into the loving mind of his Lord.

In the next paragraph, which forms the beginning of our sec-

ond chapter, other expressions occur which more obviously, though not more really, belong to the Gnostical temperament, than those of which I have already spoken. Spiritual understanding, wisdom, knowledge, perception of mysteries, were the privileges which the Colossians had learnt to think the highest of all. Each teacher would be great in proportion as he could make pretension to these. They would be spoken of as the rewards of mortification of the flesh. The spiritual, initiated man might hope to converse with angels, to be admitted into intuitions of the most secret and divine treasures. Above all, the philosophized Jewish Christian, fresh from the school of Alexandria, would speak of his great advantages in this respect,—how his circumcision was the divine and appointed instrument of bringing him out of his fleshly nature into spiritual apprehensions. He would tell the Gentile that baptism might serve him as a purification from outward defilements, and an induction into some of the lower heights of knowledge and spirituality. We may easily believe that there were also Gentile teachers who believed that baptism was the beginning of a system of purification, by which they might hope to attain a vision as clear as any child of Abraham. There can be no reason to doubt that the one dwelt on the circumcision of Christ, the other on His baptism, and that they attached a mystical signification to both, fixing upon them, probably, as great crises in His life, when the divine became more entirely blended in Him with the human, or when the spiritual nature actually displaced and expelled the earthly.

If we read the next chapter of the Epistle with even these rude hints in our minds, we may understand better the emphasis with which St. Paul dwells on his prayer, that their hearts may be comforted, being knit together in love, into all the riches of the full assurance of understanding: so intimating that only while working together as members of a body in the power of love could they attain those intellectual gifts which were the excuses for their self-exaltation. We can see why he desires for them the acknowledgment of the mystery of the Christ of God, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden,

those treasures which they were fancying they could grasp at by their high thoughts and exercises. As usual, he does not speak of the disturbers who had come into the Church till he had spoken first of its order and its constitution in Christ. This he can behold and rejoice in, though he has never seen them with his bodily eyes. He does not wish to make them something different from what they are, but to have them rooted and built up in Christ, strengthened in the faith, abounding in thanksgiving for the inheritance upon which they had entered. Certain plausible men, with plausible speeches, were bidding them seek, as if it were far off, that blessing which had been brought nigh to them, that state in which they were living and moving and having their being. They were told that certain philosophical speculations, or the following of certain human traditions, or the practice of certain external rites, might by degrees bring them into the fulness of the Godhead. But all that fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Christ, and they had that fulness in Him, and they were partakers of His circumcision, a circumcision made without hands; and they had put off the body of the flesh in Him, they had been buried with Him in baptism; they had been raised up together in Him through the faith of the energy of God who had raised Him from the dead. Thus the completeness of Christ's revelation, and work, and the complete redemption and constitution of their society in Him, became the great apostolical witnesses against the Gnostical tendency, and against the outward machinery of which it was availing itself. God had already brought them into the state into which they were trying to climb. The knowledge which they wanted was the knowledge of that state. They had the circumcision of Christ; let them claim their deliverance from fleshly lusts which he had won for them. They had the baptism into Christ's death and resurrection; let them act as if they were dead with Him and risen with Him.

"For," he goes on, "you being dead in transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He hath quickened together with Him, having forgiven us all transgressions, having wiped out the handwriting that was against us in decrees, which was contrary

to us, and He took it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." This language is not new to us. In one respect or another it has been brought before us in every epistle. But here it has a peculiar application. The want of the belief that their transgressions were pardoned, the belief that they were still under institutions which were to effect this pardon for them, not under institutions which were witnesses that they had received it, was a perpetual excuse for all Gnostical speculations, for all Gnostical asceticism. To say then that Christ had nailed these decrees as well as their sins to His cross, that in that cross the reconciliation of the Godhead with man was satisfactory and effectual, was to strike at the root of the new teaching, to kill it utterly. Still it was necessary to go into the particulars, that they might understand how the Apostle's doctrine met their case. When he speaks of Christ as having spoiled the principalities and the powers, of His displaying them openly, of His triumphing over them, we are at once led into the heart of those aspirations after acquaintance with intermediate powers and agencies which were another symptom of this Church's distemper. What need had they of such aspirations if the Lord who had taken their flesh was higher than all these, if he had proved His dominion over them? But along with these aspirations came minute and wearisome prescriptions about meat and drink, about feasts and new moons and sabbaths; all which were an excuse for hard judgments and for lordship and tyranny in particular teachers. With this came a mock humility, and the service of dæmons and angels, and a pompous contempt of visible things, and an inflation supposed to be spiritual but really proceeding from the mind of the flesh. Let them understand that shadows had passed away, and that a substance had succeeded them. Let them know that they were not to look up to angels, but to hold to the Head of angels, to Him in whom the whole body was knit together in joints and bands, by whom it was supplied with continual nourishment so as to be capable of a perpetual and divine growth. They were dead with Christ from the elements of the world. Why then did they act as if they were still

living under its rules? why did they lay down rules for each other against touching and tasting and handling? These things belonged to the earthly and the perishable; they belonged to human commands and maxims. They had an appearance of wisdom. Will-worship, mock-humiliation, contempt of the body, were all plausible promising methods of attaining higher ends. But they had no real worth, they were suggested by the flesh, and they did not satisfy the flesh.

In the following chapter, St. Paul still adheres to the mode of thinking, and in a degree to the phraseology, of those against whom he is warning the Colossians. The new teachers would have continually exhorted them to raise their minds to the things on high, not to dwell in the things that are upon the earth. They would have bid them put to death their members that were directed to the things upon the earth,—all their earthly and fleshly appetites. St. Paul makes no dishonest appropriation of their phrases, while he turns them to another use. He extracts the true and living sense out of them, he shows how the result which they were setting before themselves could not be obtained by their means; he shows what a much higher result might be attained by the faith which they were setting at nought and denying. They were to seek the things that were above, because they had been raised up with Christ, and because He was sitting at the right hand of God. They were to think of the things that were above, not of those upon the earth, because they were dead, and their life was hid with Christ in God, and because when Christ their life was manifested, then would they be manifested with Him in glory. On the other hand, the members which they were to put to death were not their bodies, but the things which were destroying their bodies as much as their spirits; fornication, uncleanness, grovelling passions, evil concupiscence and the covetousness which is idolatry, for which things' sake, he tells them as he told the Ephesians, comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience, in which things they walked while they lived in them. But now they had put off these, anger, wrath, malice, evil speaking, filthy communication

out of their mouth. We see how much the Apostle rises above the Gnostical doctors in his estimate of what men redeemed by Christ and united to him may attain; not certain visions or glimpses of a spiritual world, not converse with æons or archangels, but the very knowledge and nature of God Himself. We see how much he dives below the depths of the Gnostical teachers when he speaks of the vices from which men are to be delivered; how he strikes at the root while they were playing on the surface. And yet he is the plain practical man, they are the speculators. It is common homely morality to which he is leading his disciples, a morality which the others very commonly despised and only seldom attained. The Apostle uses the broad rude language, "Do not lie one to another," knowing perfectly well that the members of the Christian Church in that day, as in all subsequent days, were exceedingly apt to lie, and that high notions of their own spirituality were no protection against that infirmity. *The* protection against it was just that which he had been setting before them throughout his letter; "Lie not one to another; having stripped off from yourselves the old man with his deeds, and having clothed yourself with the new man, him that is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him, where there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ all and in all."

I do not know whether there is a nobler passage in all St. Paul's epistles than this, one that proves more clearly how the plainest law of individual morality is involved with the great principle of human brotherhood, or how that is grounded upon the divine and glorified humanity of Christ. Nor is there a passage which, taken in connection with the one that follows, more clearly shows how needful it is that we should claim our rights as men that have been regenerated, in order that we may rise continually to newness of life. They *had* put on the new man, "therefore put on, as elect of God holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, gentleness, humility"—(that very humility which the Gnostical teachers were mimicking with their humble airs),

"moderation, long-suffering—forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any hath a complaint against any, as also the Lord hath forgiven you. And above all this clothing, that love which is the bond of perfection." The last word shows us how thoroughly St. Paul recollects the business of his Epistle even when he is most carried away by his inspiration. How to make an initiated or perfect man who should be above all others, was the Gnostical problem; St. Paul solves it by saying, "the love which makes you submit to all others, which binds you to all others, is the secret of perfection."

Upon this foundation he grounds here, as in the Epistle to the Ephesians, the whole edifice of social life of which the Gnostics took so little account. But first he begins with the spiritual life of which they did take account, and for the cultivation of which they had so many rules and contrivances. St. Paul has only a few, but they are very comprehensive. "You have been called in one body into the peace of Christ; let that rule in your hearts. Be thankful. Let Christ's word dwell in you richly. Teach and exhort one another. Sing and make melody in your hearts to God. Whatever you do, do all in the name of Christ, thanking God and the Father in Him." Instead of the self-exalting life, you have the life of men who are submitting themselves to a blessed power of good which is striving to bless them. Instead of the individual life you have the life of mutual instruction, edification, encouragement. Instead of the ambitious life of the would-be sage or saint, you have the musical life of the churchman who feels himself one of a family, who can do nothing but in the Name of Him who is the Head of it.

And then comes these vulgar outward family duties, so obstructive to all spiritual contemplation in the judgment of the Gnostic, such precious elements in the unselfish spiritual kingdom, according to St. Paul. They are not specially different from those we have gone through in the Epistle to the Ephesians; but they serve a different purpose here. Like the exhortations to prayer for himself that God would open a door to him to speak the mystery of Christ, like all the special greetings from friends

and to friends, like the greeting with his own hand and the prayer to remember his bonds, they are all testimonies that the highest and divinest faith is the least abstract, the most human and homely and personal.

THE FIRST AND SECOND EPISTLES TO THE THESSALONIANS.

These Epistles, which stand last among the ecclesiastical Epistles of St. Paul, according to our arrangement, are commonly supposed to have been the first in the order of time. I have not attempted to ascertain the chronology of the other Epistles, and I do not mean to enter into the proofs which have been urged and accepted in support of this opinion respecting these. The motive for placing them where we find them was probably a doctrinal one. The letters to the Thessalonians speak more distinctly of a judgment than any which have preceded them; therefore though they might be comparatively early writings of the Apostle, it appeared as if for purposes of theology and church-history they should be postponed to the rest.

The history of the foundation of this Church, in the seventeenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, is important for the illustration of the Epistles. The Apostle seems to have passed rapidly through other cities of Macedonia, because there were no synagogues in them. In Thessalonica he found one, and for three sabbath-days reasoned there out of the Scriptures. The subject of this discourse was entirely adapted to the Jewish state of feeling. He had not to prove that there was a Christ, but that *the* Christ must needs suffer and rise from the dead, and that Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified Man, was this Christ. A few, it appears, of the Jews believed the word, and consorted

with Paul and Silas. But the great majority of their converts were from devout Greeks, — proselytes, apparently, who frequented the synagogue. Then began a fiercer opposition from the circumcised party than they had yet encountered. First, they sought to incite the populace against the new preachers, who assaulted the house of Paul's entertainer. Then, they either in their own persons, or through "lewd fellows of the baser sort," sought to alarm the representatives of the empire, by the old argument, "these men that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also; which all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying, that there is another king, one Jesus." I call it an old argument because it is one which had been used against our Lord when He was brought before Pilate. But so far as St. Paul's experience had gone, it was new. He had had the sharpest conflicts with his countrymen; but they had turned on the question whether Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. As yet they had not made use of the only plea against him which had any real weight with their masters. Here it was successful. The rulers were troubled, and took security of Jason and the others. Paul and Silas were sent away by night into Berœa.

Thus the ground of this Church was laid amidst more than usual persecution. The circumstances of its birth portended storms in its childhood and youth. There could be no doubt from what quarter the opposition would come, or what form it would take. A violent Jewish faction would denounce the notion that Jesus was the King whom their nation had been expecting, would avail themselves of the help of those whose dominion they most hated, to oppose His pretensions, would put forth an idea of the Christ as unlike as possible to that which was exhibited in Him, would be ready to welcome any person who embodied this idea. These were the symptoms which clearly foreshowed to the Apostle the coming ruin of his nation, the approach of the events which our Lord had said would take place before that generation had passed away. The thoughts of an Antichrist and of a judgment were thus forced upon St. Paul, by the circumstances of the Thessalonians, more distinctly

and prominently than they were by those of any other Church. Nor could he help seeing, in those circumstances, an indication that there might be a strange blending of Gentile and Jewish maxims in the time that was at hand, that the new Christ might possibly be clothed with the purple, though he might also present himself in some form which should satisfy the ambition of those who sought for an heir of the house of David. The vision, in whichever way it was looked at, was most portentous. The Jew must more utterly and openly deny the God of Abraham than he had denied him yet, before he could quite bow down before an image that was directly opposed to that of a King reigning in righteousness. The tyranny of the Cæsars must become more utterly frightful, more entirely brutal and godless than it had yet been. Finally, the awful saying of Christ, that love of many would wax cold, that the false Christs might almost deceive the very elect, even if they had not been interpreted by the experience of the perils of the infant Churches, could not but suggest the fear that Christians would participate in all the temptations of the surrounding world, and that many of them would fall into an abyss as much deeper than that of Jews or Gentiles, as their exaltation had been greater. If one connects with these reflections the extreme tenderness and affection which the Apostle felt for this Church, a tenderness and affection like that of a mother for a child which is passing through the crisis of a disease, we shall be furnished with most of the data which we require for the interpretation of this Epistle.

Persecution would seem to be a condition so common to all Churches, that the reader may hardly be prepared to look at it specially in reference to the Thessalonians. But after going through so many of the Pauline Epistles, I may boldly say that persecution is not a leading topic in any one of them, except in that to the other Macedonian Church at Philippi. And in *that* society, the effects of persecution were evidently different from those which the Apostle discovered among the Thessalonians. These last do not seem to have been cast down or overwhelmed by the afflictions which they endured. Despondency was at any

rate not their chief failing. The character of the opposition which they underwent apparently led the Apostle, while he was with them, to speak much of the coming day of the Lord, and to use the expectation of it as an encouragement to patience and hope. Such words were as easily perverted then as since. What need for men to toil and get their bread if some great event was at hand? Might it not take them away from all earthly things, or give them such a command of earthly things as they had never had before? With this kind of listlessness about the present, is apt to spring up an indifference to common earthly morality, not fully developed, but making itself apparent from time to time. Speculations about the future, about the nearness or distance of the events to which the Apostle had alluded, would occupy much of the minds of the Christians. All brightness being seen in the future, only a gloom resting on the past, the world before the time of Christ's appearing would look very blank and dreary: how sad to have lived and died in that period! With these tendencies, which persecution is so likely to generate, would be mixed many of the graces and virtues which God uses it to call forth,—courage and endurance, with a brotherly affection and sympathy not wholly unaffected by the evil habits to which I have alluded, but still acquiring strength from the presence of the adversaries. It would be, not seldom, accompanied by a somewhat reckless defiance of them and a proud contempt of their opinion.

The mischievous influences which were at work in this Church, only reveal themselves gradually in the midst of the earnest thanksgivings of the Apostle to God for their work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope of our Lord Jesus Christ. He rejoices that they know their election of God; that His Gospel did not come to them in word only, but in power and in the Holy Spirit and much assurance; that they were imitators of him, and of the Lord, inasmuch as they had received the word amidst much tribulation with joy of the Holy Spirit; that they were examples to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia; that their faith in God was known everywhere; and that from

them the word of the Lord had sounded forth far and wide. Again and again he commemorates the nature and depth of their conversion in the memorable and expressive words, that they had turned from idols to God, to serve a living and true God. Again and again he connects that service with the waiting for His Son from the Heavens whom he raised from the dead, Jesus the deliverer of us from the wrath that is coming.

These words may show that it is far enough from the Apostle's intention to explain away the language of his discourses, or to alter the character of the teaching which had been so effectual at the first, in consequence of the discovery that it had been perverted. We ought carefully to remember that this is never his method, that he does not qualify the truths which he had thought necessary at a former time, or exchange them for others, but labors to bring them out in the fulness of their meaning, this being the right correction for any partial apprehensions of them. But first he enters with more than usual particularity into the manner of life of himself and his fellow-missionaries among them. He does not apparently introduce this topic for the reason which made it necessary among the Corinthians, because his objects had been misrepresented, or because other teachers were set up in rivalry against him. The Thessalonians, so far as we can gather from the letter, returned his affection to them, and had been from the first as much influenced by his life as by his words. For that reason he is the more anxious to recall to them what it was that they observed in him, which they recognized as coming from God, which at once found its way to their hearts. Was it not a watchful tender behavior towards them while they were yet Gentiles, a gentleness and tenderness which they saw was entirely free from flattery, was not prompted by any motive of covetousness? Was it not their labor and hardships, the toil with their own hands that they might not be chargeable to any, by which Paul and Silas had proved how dear they were to them? Was it not the continuance of holy and blameless behavior among those who had believed, the exhortations and warnings by which they showed them how much care they needed

to keep the treasure which they had won, to walk worthy of the God who was calling them into His own kingdom and glory?

St. Paul could apply language of this kind as freely to himself as to any other man when it was called for and would do any good. The edge of the self-praise is all taken off in the next sentence, in which he thanks God that when they received the word of God from him and Silas, they received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which is energizing in us who believe it. The same word energized in the Thessalonians, for they became imitators of the Churches of God that were in Judæa in Christ Jesus. The reason for alluding specially to those Churches is given immediately after. The sufferings of the Thessalonians had been caused by the same persons who were the authors of *their* sufferings. Jews in Macedonia had proved their affinity with Jews in Palestine, who had persecuted the Lord Jesus and the Prophets, who had persecuted also the Apostles, forbidding them to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, so as to fill up their sins altogether. For the wrath had come upon them even to the end.

Both the allusions of the Apostle to his own life, and those to the Jewish enemies of the Thessalonians, have a reference to the infirmities which he had observed in them as well as to the hopes which they were indulging. Without telling them directly that they were *not* laboring with their own hands, *not* walking wisely towards their heathen neighbors, *not* careful in all their inner life to keep the light burning, in all their outward acts to let it shine before men, the example of what their first teachers had been, the recollection of the impression which this example had made upon them, would be the most effectual admonition that he could administer. And the hint about the Jews did not merely remind them that the Apostle was a much greater sufferer than they were from the same opponents; it told them what the cause of the Jewish hostility was, how it grew out of a godless and inhuman unwillingness that other men should share in their privileges. It reminded them that the day of redemption they were expecting, and had a right to expect, would be also a

day of wrath which would not be accomplished till God's own chosen people had suffered that tremendous downfall, which, as St. Paul told the Romans, he would have been himself accursed from Christ to avert.

The appearing of Christ then to which the Apostle had taught them to look forward, was connected with sorrow and tribulation both to themselves and to the world. It was not one which he or they dared look forward to as the accomplishment of any selfish dreams. He expresses the desire which he had felt to come to them, it would seem, for the very purpose of telling them this. "For," he says, "are you not our joy and hope and crown of rejoicing before our Lord Jesus in His appearing?" The expression seems thrown in by the way, or rather it starts out from the fulness of the Apostle's heart, without any reference to the subject which has occupied him. But the utterances of an inspired man, however little they may seem to belong to a dry argument, must illustrate and unfold the thought which is governing him. In telling them his own mind towards them, he has given them a whole volume of instruction respecting the day which he and they are to anticipate. It is one which he desires for their sakes, for the sake of the Church, because Christ will be glorified in them, because He will be manifested as the Lord both of Jew and Gentile.

As he could not go to them himself, he says he had sent Timothy to comfort them and strengthen them, that the tribulations which they suffered might not give occasion to the tempter, but that they might receive them as their natural and appointed discipline. The report of Timothy had cheered him. It had called forth fresh thanksgivings to God. For it had made him pray and desire more earnestly that he might see them. He trusted that God Himself, and the Lord Jesus would direct his way to them. But he trusted still more that God would make them to abound in love to each other and to all, so as to strengthen their hearts unblameable in holiness before God and our Father in the appearing of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Every one must perceive, from the way in which St. Paul

recurs to this expression, that it is the cardinal one of this letter. How frequent it is in all his epistles we have perceived already. But it has not stood forth anywhere with the same distinctness as here. The Apostle has not yet set himself to remove perplexities that directly bore upon it, and to connect the life of the Church with it, as he does in writing to the Thessalonians. The next passage, with which we are all familiar as an independent exhortation, should never be disjoined from the words that precede it. The way to prepare for the appearing of Christ was to remember those ordinary vulgar precepts which the Apostle had given them, and which, in their eagerness and anxiety about that which was to be hereafter, they were forgetting. For though these moral rules might take a mere hard external shape, they were connected with the most profound theology, with the most mysterious spiritual principles. The precept to "abstain from fornication," was grounded on the doctrine that "this is the will of God, even your sanctification." The rule not to overreach one's brother in any matter, was grounded on the truth that the Lord was the Judge. Both alike would be observed if they recollected that God had given to them the Holy Spirit. St. Paul was rejoiced to think that they did excel in love to the brethren both in their own city and in all Macedonia. But he would have them remember that they had a duty also to those who are without; that quietness, minding their own business, laboring with their own hands, were spiritual duties, part of their divine vocation.

Lessons of this kind, be it ever remembered, were expressly suggested by the Apostle's belief, and his wish to impress his disciples with the belief, that the day of the Lord was at hand. In proportion as the impression of that day was deep and settled in their minds, would they be free from restlessness and anxiety, quiet in the midst of strife, attentive to all common duties, considerate of their fellow-men. But there was one cause of anxiety which was not selfish, and which seemed to have its root in the very expectation which the Apostle encouraged them to entertain. Their friends who had died and left the world, what had become of them? Was not it a sad calamity for any

who had not survived till the Incarnation of their Lord? might it not be sad for those who should not survive till that appearing of which the Apostle spoke? The thought was a very natural one, more natural than we are exactly aware, who form theories about the state of the departed, and about our state, which have very little reference to any appearing or manifestation of Christ. *Their* minds, formed in the Apostolical school, could imagine no blessedness that was not associated with His appearing. The Apostle's answer to their difficulty involved the clearest exposition of the nature of this appearing which he had yet given them. They were not to limit it by their notions respecting time or locality. If they believed that Christ had died and risen again, they believed in a union of both worlds, a breaking down of the barrier that separated the state before death from the state after death,—the visible and the invisible world. Such a belief, if they truly entertained it, would assure them that those whom they called dead had fallen asleep, but that Christ was as much with them as He was with the daughter of Jairus or with Lazarus; that they could as much hear His voice as those departed spirits had done; that as they were members of Christ's body, and drew their life from Him, God would bring them with Him.

And this therefore he tells them by the word of the Lord, that "we, the living ones, we that are left over unto the appearing of the Lord, shall not anticipate those that have been put to sleep. Because the Lord Himself with a cry, with the voice of an archangel and with the trump of God, shall descend from Heaven; and then we, the living, shall together with them be caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in air; and so shall we be ever with the Lord." Sentences which sooner pass into music than most in the Scriptures, and to which the hearts of most men confess a strange response, yet which give as much trouble to the understanding as any that we know of. May I venture to suggest that if we followed the impulses of our hearts, and took the words as they stand, and tried less to measure them according to certain notions of ours, some of the perplexities we have found in them might perhaps disappear? The first question we are disposed

to ask is, "And was St. Paul then alive at the appearing of the Lord, even supposing that appearing identical with some event that took place in that generation?" This question involves a subject which has occupied us much in former parts of this volume; the reconsideration of it may help us to trace a unity in the books of the New Testament; a full apprehension of it would be the most satisfactory key to the connection between the history of the Christian Church and the prophecies of the Old and New Testament.

All the hopes of the old prophets pointed to an appearing or manifestation of a King of Israel, and a Son of God. They interpreted the thoughts and hopes which were consciously or unconsciously striving in all men whatsoever. They said what kind of person "the desire of all nations must be." I have endeavored to show that the Gospels present such a person to us. They say, "This Jesus is the Son of God, this Jesus is the King of Israel. We declare to you how He showed, while He was upon earth, walking about as the friend of fishermen, as the carpenter's son, that He had both these characters. We affirm that His crucifixion was the most necessary part of His manifestation in these characters, as well as of the work which he came to do in them. We affirm that His resurrection was the final assurance given here upon earth that He was what the Jewish Sanhedrim and the Roman governor denied that He was. But that resurrection involved His not continuing upon earth. It was consummated by His ascension to the right hand of God. So He was declared to be both Lord and Christ. The descent of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the witness that this ascension involved no separation from his disciples and witnesses upon earth. It enabled them to be real and effective witnesses of His resurrection, that is to say, of His being the risen and victorious Lord of man, the Redeemer of the Spirit and soul and body of man, the Restorer and Regenerator of humanity." Was nothing more involved in the ascension and in the gift of the Spirit than this? The more the Apostles received of the spiritual illumination, the more they were *certain* that there was. If Christ had

died and risen again, if He had ascended on high, if He was both Lord and Christ, if they had not deceived men when they bore this testimony concerning Him, there would be an appearing or manifestation of Him in that character, a manifestation which would be as real as His appearing in the likeness of a servant, which would carry out that appearing to its effect and result, as the crucifixion had carried out the incarnation, as the resurrection had carried out the crucifixion, as the ascension and descent of the Spirit had carried out the resurrection. All these, strictly speaking, were parts of the same appearing, were different acts of the drama, leading on to a catastrophe which was absolutely inevitable, if the great Hero of it, He who had been directing the operations of the world since it had been created, had really come to assert His own right over it, had really shown how all the subordinate personages had been working with Him and for Him. It was strictly in accordance with the method of the old prophets to regard all the events that might occur in a particular generation as parts of the same appearing or day of the Lord; though the first might be separated from the last by an interval of many years; though the events might be very unlike each other in their outward character, some being bright and some gloomy; though a visitation of locusts might lead to an outpouring of the Spirit, and that to some critical battle in the valley of Jehoshaphat. The link between all these events was that they proved God was present and was at work for the putting down of evil, and the establishment of righteousness. John the Baptist, the herald of the Divine King, had proclaimed the wrath that was coming upon the land, as the great result of His coming, that to which the preaching of repentance and the baptism of the Spirit would lead, that which would be the sign that the kingdom he spoke of as at hand, had actually been revealed. We have seen how consistent with this preparatory announcement were all the discourses of our Lord, and most conspicuously the one which preceded the last Passover.

How then could St. Paul, if he were really imbued with the lessons which he had received from the old teachers of his land,

if he really believed the outward and inward manifestations which had been made to himself, have doubted that he was living in a day of the Lord, in that day of the Lord towards which all others had been leading? Whether or not he should be on earth at the winding up of that day,—at the appearing of the Lord which he fully believed, on his Lord's own assurance, would take place in that generation,—he was one of those who *had been* alive and remained to the appearing of the Lord, seeing he was a witness of the incarnation and the resurrection and the ascension, seeing that Christ had been outwardly revealed *to* him on the way to Damascus, seeing that God had been pleased to reveal His Son *in* him, seeing that he had preached that Son as the Desire of all nations, to Greeks and Barbarians. And it was no play upon language to speak thus. By it he met the perplexity in the minds of the Thessalonians. He removed their fear about the condition of their fathers. He enlarged their feelings about the revelation of the Lord. He gave them an additional assurance of that revelation which was yet to be, and which was so near at hand by treating it as one of a series of events, many of which were already fulfilled.

If we have overcome this first difficulty, I do not think the rest of the passage will trouble us; nay, I believe if we receive it, it will be full of the consolation which the Apostle told the Thessalonians there lay in it. He affirms certainly that the Lord would descend from Heaven with the voice of an archangel and the trump of God. And if we believe in our Lord's own words respecting the earthquakes and the distress of nations with perplexity, which were to occur in that generation, we may well believe that a trumpet did sound, that the voice of the archangel was heard by mortal ears. Nor does it signify, as far as the statement of the Apostle is concerned, whether that voice was recognized by many or any of those "whom the muddy vesture of decay did grossly close," whether *they* perceived or not that it betokened the descent of the Lord from Heaven. What he declares is, that those who had fallen asleep before the appearing of our Lord upon earth, would hear his voice and would rise

up as those did who heard it in the days of His humiliation ; not to return, as they did, to speak and walk again among men, but to be with him to share His glory. And what he further says is, that he and the Thessalonians who had not fallen asleep before the appearing of Christ in the world, who had survived to that great day of the Lord, would be sharers in the same blessing, since they would not and could not have any higher one. Only there would be this difference ; since Christ had died and was risen again, the grave could no longer be looked upon as receiving those whom Christ had redeemed. Even the word *sleep*, which belonged to the former time, would not be applicable to this. The departure of those who were in Christ, would be really a translation. They would not sink, but rise. They would not go down to meet the worms, but ascend to meet Christ. The phrase, "meeting the Lord in the air," seems expressly used to discourage the carnal notion of His coming down as an earthly king, to reign visibly upon earth. The translation which the Apostle speaks of, was an object of faith, not of sight. The Thessalonians were not called to imagine that He would be invested with the purple with which He was clothed in mockery upon earth ; but that He would come in the glory with which he ascended, in the glory of His Father and the holy angels, that those who had shared His sufferings might partake it with Him.

I have said that this very literal way of construing the Apostle's words, the most literal I can conceive, and the most consonant with the rest of the New Testament, must have conveyed great consolation to the Thessalonians, and may convey the like to us. If events which were to occur very soon, bore witness to them that the Lord who had died and risen again was actually present, and was reigning over the universe, they would look upon those events, however portentous in themselves, as accomplishing the expectations and hopes of one dispensation, and as inaugurating a new and higher one. They would look upon those events as denoting a crisis in the history of the universe, which did not affect only or chiefly its visible conditions, but affected the relations between those who were still and those who

had been upon the earth, and put an altogether new interpretation upon the facts of earthly life and earthly death. And if *we* had courage to believe that what St. Paul said actually came to pass, and that we are living in that better age of the world to which he was looking forward, we might perhaps claim many privileges as our possession, which we suppose *may be* ours in a distant future; we might think that much more has been done for us and for mankind, than we have at all dreamed of; we might look forward with much greater confidence to that which shall be done when the mists which surround us are scattered, and we are able to walk in the full light of God's countenance.

But to realize this comfort, we must heed, as carefully as the Thessalonians were called upon to heed, the words which follow. "But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that it should be written to you. For you yourselves perfectly know that a day of the Lord as a thief at night so cometh. When they say, Peace and safety, then a sudden destruction is standing over them like the travail to a woman with child. But you, brethren, are not in darkness that the day should come upon you as a thief." (Lachmann has "thieves;" a very tempting alteration, which one would be much inclined to adopt if the previous verse did not seem to forbid it, and if it were not *too* natural a substitute for the common reading.) "For ye are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night, nor of darkness. Then let us not sleep, as the rest. But let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep by night, and they that are drunkards drink by night. But let us, being of the day, be sober, having put upon us the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. Because God hath not appointed us to wrath, but unto the procuring of salvation, through that Lord of us, Jesus Christ, Him that died for us; that whether we wake or whether we sleep, we may live together with Him." Here lay the grand correction of their irregular practices, as well as of their confused belief. The day of the Lord presented itself to them as a time or season which they were to ascertain by some calculations,—calculations which, though the prophets

might furnish the material of them, were pursued upon the very maxims of the astrologers and soothsayers whom the prophets denounced. The Apostle was not desirous to make them doubtful that the day was at hand,—that they were on the eve of it,—nay, that they were *in* it, though the sun might not yet have reached his full height in the heavens. But this confidence, as well as all the hope and the diligence which it would engender, —was not promoted but hindered by restless speculations about the meaning and issue of particular events, or the accomplishment of supposed predictions. When St. Paul spoke of a day, he did not mean a day of twenty-four hours, but a day as opposed to night, light as opposed to darkness. He so explains his meaning to the Romans and to the Corinthians—here with still greater minuteness, on account of the particular errors which he had to encounter. The more we observe his language, and compare it with that which we find elsewhere, the more we perceive with what divine skill and delicacy he is opening their minds to a deeper perception of the truth he is teaching, while he is giving it a practical force and awfulness which in their hands it was very likely to lose. We perceive at the same time, how much all his corrections of their mistakes are united with the encouragement, not the discouragement, of their belief and of their hopes. They had not thought too highly of their present position. They had been inclined to make the thought of a future time an excuse for disparaging it. They were sons of the light and of the day *then;* they were not to *become* so afterwards. But they were to expect blessings which they had not received: they were to look for a full salvation from all that oppressed and crushed them. The hope of it was a helmet, the best protection from some of the most perilous and deadly assaults of their enemy. While they cherished it, they would keep themselves awake; if they lost it, they would sink into sleep.

The exhortations which follow, though they might be suitable to any Church, have, I think, a peculiar appropriateness to the circumstances and temper of this one. One can easily imagine that the restlessness of speculation about the coming time, and

the advantage which it gave to quick and clever diviners to exalt their own auguries above homelier and more practical teaching, would hinder them from knowing those who were laboring among them, their appointed guides and counsellors, or from setting much store by their quiet labors of love. And though the Apostle has borne them witness that there was brotherly love amongst them, the peace of the Church must have often been interrupted by rival predictors. A certain impatience of government,—with that which corresponds to it, a loss of the faculty in governing,—may have produced many unruly spirits who needed to be admonished. The desponding would often be left without comfort by those who were busy about times and seasons. There would be an intolerance of the weak, and that pride of half knowledge which is most opposed to sympathy and long suffering. There might be some particular instance of revenge or of bitterness towards those who were without, which led to the warning against returning evil for evil. The other exhortation, "Pursue the good always towards one another, and towards all," reminded them that they were members of a Church, a body of witnesses whose conduct towards each other was a testimony to the world. The exhortations to "rejoice always," and to "pray without ceasing," like the similar ones which he addressed to the Philippians—derive a new force, as in that case, from the tribulations to which both were exposed. The command, "In all things give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus unto you," kept them in mind of the truth which persecuted men, and men expecting a judgment upon others, were so likely to forget, that the Will of God is a will to all good, and that they were only right when they were rejoicing in that will, and subjecting their own to it. The Thessalonians might have seemed less likely than others to quench the Spirit, or despise prophesyings ; but the Spirit of God is not the spirit of divination, and prophecies in the apostolical sense are not predictions. Our interpretations have cruelly mangled the beautiful precepts that follow. "Prove all things. Hold on to the good. Hold off from every form of evil." For we have incul-

cated a doctrine,—exceedingly in accordance with our cowardice and feebleness, utterly adverse and contrary to the teaching and example of Christ and His Apostles,—that we are to abstain from all that *appears* evil in the sight of men. He had bidden them test all things, to see what they were good for, and yet they were to shrink from every thing that looked bad to those who judged according to the appearance, and did not judge righteous judgment! If the Apostle had so preached at the end of an epistle specially concerning Christ's day and Christ's judgment, specially exhorting them to wait for *that*, the contradiction would have been flagrant indeed. But he is guilty of no such inconsistency. He winds up his exhortations with a prayer, not that they may abstain from the things which appear evil to those who are themselves evil, but that the God of peace would make them thoroughly holy and perfect, that their spirit and soul and body, as one entire inheritance, might be preserved without blame to the APPEARING of our Lord Jesus Christ.

No one, I believe, has ever doubted the connection between the two Epistles to the Thessalonians. The relation between them is not merely like that between the two to the Corinthians. The subject is the same in both, and the second is commonly and perhaps rightly, assumed to have arisen out of mistakes respecting the intention of the first. It is clear from the opening of the Epistle (the part of it included in our first chapter) that the tribulations of the Thessalonians had continued and increased. St. Paul intimates that faith and patience and love were also increasing. "An evidence," he says, "of the righteous judgment of God, to the end that ye may be made worthy of the kingdom of God; for which also ye are suffering: seeing that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense to those who trouble you, tribulation, and to you the troubled, rest with us in the unveiling of the Lord Jesus from heaven, with the angels of his power, in the flame of fire, giving out recompense to them

who know not God, and to them who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall receive the judgment of eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be wondered at by all who believe; for our testimony to you was believed in that day." I have extracted this passage, partly that the reader may see at once how much the Apostle is occupied with the subject of a coming judgment, in this as in the former epistle; secondly, that he may be led diligently to consider the expressions which the Apostle uses to to describe the nature of this judgment, and to compare them with similar expressions in other parts of the New Testament. I suppose there is no passage which would be so readily accepted as a classical and a cardinal one on the whole question of judgment and of punishment. Let us examine it, that we may, if possible, get some light on subjects so deeply concerning all men in all ages.

The faith and patience and love of the Thessalonians were, the Apostle believed, means to their being made worthy, or, if we follow our translation, to their being counted worthy of the kingdom of God. If that kingdom of God is the kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy, patience and hope, and love would seem to be the instruments whereby it is enjoyed or inherited, as a clear eye is the instrument by which any beautiful landscape is enjoyed or inherited. So our Lord had taught in the Sermon on Mount. The poor in spirit would have the kingdom of heaven, the pure in heart would see God. It was not they would be paid for being poor in spirit or being pure in heart by certain gifts in a future world. It was that being poor in spirit, they would not crave to be rulers themselves, but would rejoice to have the true Lord for the ruler of their hearts; it was that the light which was in them not being darkened, the purified man would be able to know Him in whom he was living and moving and having his being. The righteous judgment of God then, which the Apostle anticipates, is that which would affirm who were living as children and citizens of God's kingdom; even

as also the righteous judgment which he anticipates upon the persecutors is that which is the opposite of rest, the trouble and dismay and confusion that belong to those who have sought to exalt themselves aud have trampled upon others. "In the revelation of Jesus Christ with His angels from heaven," in that great day-light of the universe which shall show all things as they really are, there will be recompense to those who have not known God, and who do not obey the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this recompense he describes as eternal destruction from the face of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. The recompense of the wicked corresponds exactly to that of the righteous. The true judgment of God ascertains the condition of both. Each obtains what he is seeking after. As the state of knowing God and being like Him is the reward of the one, the state of not knowing Him and being without Him is the punishment of the other. This is called æonian or eternal destruction, the most awful state to which a spiritual being can be reduced. We are not told how long or how short a time that destruction may last. Time, I conceive, enters as little into the question here as into our Lord's discourse in the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew. In one and the other the language denotes a moral condition of being. In one passage and in the other the revelation or unveiling of Christ which distinguishes every person and declares what he is, is described as that which separates those on the right hand from those on the left. Nor must it be forgotten that this judgment, as well, I conceive, as that spoken of in the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew, is the judgment which was to wind up that age or dispensation of the world. Those who had called Jesus a blasphemer because He said He was the Son of God, would find out what sort of being they had been worshipping under the name of God, what a Being they had rejected when they had said that the crucified Man was not His true image. And what other blessing could a faithful man desire than to see in that crucified Man the real King of the universe, the full glory of the Father. St. Paul then, while he cherishes the faith and hope of the Thessalonians in this judgment

of Christ, gives them the clearest indication of what was to be feared and what was to be hoped in that judgment. It was to be desired earnestly because it was true, not because it would favor Christians or Jews or Gentiles. It was to be desired, because it would bring forth the true image of God, and would confound all dark and false and hateful images of Him by whomsoever, Jew, heathen, or Christian, they were set up.

And now on the strength of the appearing of Christ, and of that blessed gathering together in Him which was the realization and fruition of their life as members of a Church, he conjures them not to be quickly shaken, or agitated in mind, either through spirit or through word or through letter as coming from him, with the thought that the day of the Lord was coming instantly. "Let no one," he says, "deceive you in any wise, because it will not come unless the apostasy come first, and there be revealed the man of sin, he that is the adversary, and that lifts himself up above every one that is called a god, and above every form of worship, so as to set himself in the temple of God, showing that he is God." I might of course spend pages or volumes upon this passage, if I allowed myself to travel over eighteen centuries of history, and to inquire which of all the illustrious names that occur in them most accords with this description, and is to be understood as fulfilling it. But as hitherto we have been obliged, by reverence for the Apostle's words, and for the harmony of the Scriptures, to suppose that he is speaking of events which were to take place in his own day, I must waive all such questions, and only try to ascertain from this passage itself, what kind of manifestation it is which is spoken of. Then perhaps we shall be better judges of any historical facts which answered to the words at that time; and we may be able hereafter to deal fairly not with one, but with all, the different alleged fulfilments of them in subsequent times.

There can be no doubt then, I think,—indeed very few have doubted,—that we have here the description of the appearing of an Antichrist, in anticipation of that appearance of the Christ, whereof St. Paul has been speaking so much. Whatever is

opposed to the lowliness of the Son of Man, to the character of the King who came meek and sitting upon an ass, to His acts who ministered to others instead of being ministered to himself, to Him who gave Himself for the world, is gathered up and concentrated in these sentences. The man of sin is opposed to the Lord our Righteousness; the son of perdition to the Saviour; he who sets himself up above every thing that is called God, to Him who humbled Himself and became of no reputation; he who sits in the temple of God, showing himself as God, to Him who said, "Father, not my will but Thine be done." It is also clear, I think, that a power is described to us which claims dominion both over the Gentile and the Jewish world, exalting itself above every form of worship in the first, proclaiming its superiority to the one Jehovah of the other. The word apostasy, as I have already intimated, would appear to import a reverence paid to this power not by Jews and heathens only, but by the professed disciples of Jesus. Now as the *Divus Imperator* was always striving to set himself above all that is called God, to claim all the gods and worships of the empire as his tributaries, as there was much that resisted this tendency in the old laws and faith of the Roman state, as the temple of Jerusalem was the one great abiding witness against it, as every holy man who upheld the true worship of that temple was in his own person a check upon this last consummation of human or rather of brute worship, I conceive that the whole period from the reign of Augustus downward was an approximation to the accomplishment of this antichristian idea, but that it never was embodied even in the person of Nero. It is no new theory of mine, but one which biblical scholars have oftentimes suggested, that Vitellius exhibits all the characteristics which are here presented to us. It will be a fitter opportunity to consider that opinion when we examine the Apocalypse. I do not ask any one to accept it, or even pledge myself to it. I feel the doubtfulness even of the best of such identifications, in proportion as I feel the truth and certainty of the Apostle's assertion, that such a power did exist, that it had not yet reached its fullest, worst, development.

He asks the Thessalonians whether they do not remember that he told them these things when he was yet with them. The special opposition which they encountered from the Jews made such teaching, as I hinted before, more needful for them than for others. He could not tell them that Jesus was the Christ or that He would be manifested as the Christ, without telling them what a different and contrary idea of a Christ there was in the world, and how the world in all its different sections would at last find some representative of that idea. He says that they knew also what the restraining influence was, which prevented this mystery of iniquity from coming at once and fully into light. Afterwards he seems to speak of this restraining influence as being in a person, "He that lets will let till he be taken out of the way." Considering that the Apostle must have looked for the great divine centre of resistance to the antichristian principle in Jerusalem, considering that he must have felt that the Pharisees and Sadduces of that city were more possessed and penetrated by it than any worshipper of Jupiter, it seems not an unreasonable supposition, which many have entertained, that he supposed the restraining power to lie in the church at Jerusalem, and most especially in the Apostle James. The effects of his "being taken out of the way" upon the city itself, all the parties in which reverenced his righteousness,—and still more upon the Church itself,—would answer very strikingly to the words of the brother-apostle who is so often represented as his rival. When that great impediment was removed, it would seem as if the mystery of iniquity, which had been so long at work did come forth most mightily where it might least have been looked for, and as if nothing but the destruction of the city and the temple (so nearly contemporaneous with the destruction of the Capitol, with the downfall of Vitellius, and the commencement, if not the establishment, of a better era) could have prevented the hideous and godless tyranny,—sustained as it was by all signs and lying wonders, by all deceivableness of unrighteousness, by the tricks of the diviner and enchanter,—from permanently establishing itself over the world. The overthrow of such a power would

have seemed to the prophets of the old world a day of the Lord indeed, immeasurably more wonderful, more pregnant, more a pledge of future blessings, than the downfall of Sennacherib or Belshazzar. But when it was connected with the incarnation, the death, and the resurrection of the Son of Man, it could be looked upon as nothing else than His appearance to claim the kingdom which He had proved to be His Father's and which the power of evil was seeking to wrest from Him.

On this firm ground, the Apostle can raise thanksgivings to God and arguments to his converts as earnest as those in the first letter. His thanksgiving is that God has chosen them as a first-fruit unto salvation by sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. His prayer is that God would comfort their hearts and strengthen them in every good word and work. His entreaty, which might be a command, is, that they would keep the rules he has given them, and that they would separate themselves from every brother who walked disorderly. He explains his words, by bringing out more distinctly the charge which he had hinted at before, that there were some who were not workers, but over-workers, or as we say, busybodies. "If a man will not work, neither let him eat," is the Apostle's rule, which he had first illustrated by his example. He will have no trifling or equivocation in this matter, no fine dainty saints who are so busy with their spirits that they have not time to fulfil their proper manual callings, no waiters for the Lord who will not do what the Lord commands them. There must be discipline, he says, especially with such persons; only they must not be treated as enemies, but warned as brothers. And then he beseeches the Lord of peace to give them peace always in every place, and he prays that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ might be with them all.

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES.

THE same kind of objection which has been raised against the Epistle to the Colossians has been applied also to these epistles. In the case of the Epistle to Timothy, the very objection which I considered, as to the antedating of Gnosticism, is urged with even greater plausibility. But the *similar* objection, that these epistles suppose an organization of the Church which did not exist till a period after the death of the Apostle Paul, bears upon them in their common character of pastoral letters, and affects, in a much less degree, those which are addressed to the different societies in Italy, Greece or Asia.

The subject is a very interesting one, and I should be forgetting the purpose of these lectures if I passed it over. There is, I conceive, the best possible ground for the assertion, that the nature of the Church in the Apostle's days ought not to be deduced from what we read of the Church, even at the commencement of the second century. For instance, it would be the greatest possible mistake to suppose that the feelings of the Roman Empire, under the *worst* of its rulers, were as adverse to the Christians in the first period as they were under the very *best* in the subsequent period. Nero did not treat the Christians more cruelly than he treated his other subjects. It was by accident, or impulse, or for a motive of temporary convenience, that he persecuted them at all. Trajan persecuted them upon principle, in conformity with the very same policy which made him benignant to his subjects generally. This is an amazing difference, which presupposes the existence of other differences.

Since it was the organization of the Church in the great cities of the empire which alarmed intelligent rulers like Trajan or Marcus Aurelius, there is abundant excuse for imagining that such an organization was wanting in the earlier time. And this opinion is strengthened in many minds by the observation, that so little is said in the canonical epistles of that which seemed the most conspicuous feature of the Christian society afterwards. "Though the names of bishops, or presbyters, or deacons, occur here and there in the letters to the Churches, yet how accidental the introduction of them appears to be; how little the doctrinal or even the practical part of the epistle would seem to be affected by their presence or their absence; how easy therefore it is to suppose that they have been introduced at a later time when they were felt to be indispensable to the very existence of the Church! If they put themselves much more distinctly and prominently forward in these letters, is not that a reason for suspecting *them* to be spurious?"

Supposing the conclusion we arrived at in considering the Epistle to the Thessalonians to be the true one, we must certainly expect to see the Church standing forth much more substantively in the age that was coming, after the great crisis of which the Apostle speaks, than in the previous time. And if we consider the nature of that crisis, the reason is evident. That national organization which the Jew regarded as sacred and divine, the central organization of the world, was to be shaken and broken up. The expectation was that the Church would emerge out of this wreck and chaos, to be the beginning and root of a new human community. Only when it took this form, would it be the completely developed society, of which the society that grew up on the day of Pentecost was the germ; only then could it be felt as a really rival kingdom by the world which the Cæsars ruled. Before that time, it was still in the eyes of Romans one of the Jewish sects. In that character the opposing Jews were always seeking to represent it. And how would it seem to the members of the Church themselves, to their teachers, and to the Apostles? We have seen that it is not easy

to give a single answer to this question. The answer comes out gradually in different aspects. St. James and St. Peter were most anxious to recognize the old organization of the Jewish people, to speak of the twelve tribes, to make their countrymen conscious of their peculiar calling, to present Christ as the son of David, who was come to gather them in one, however they might be dispersed among the Gentiles. These Apostles of the circumcision would of course be reluctant by any means to convey the impression that they were *setting up* a society. They wished only to be a body of witnesses for the true Lord of the society to which they did belong, and of which they rejoiced to think themselves members. Still they *were* a body of witnesses. They had need of ministers to do their work. Deacons were chosen to meet a new necessity. The apostles held the office which had been given them by Christ. The old forms of the Jewish commonwealth, reviving and recovering their old family character, suggested the position of the Elders. When an *ecclesia*, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, grew up in the cities which St. Paul visited, all different functions and gifts, as we find in the Epistles to the Corinthians and Ephesians, appeared, and were referred to the one Lord and the one Spirit. Whatever was necessary to a body politic was found in each of these bodies. And St. Paul was careful to remind each of them, that it was a divine society called out by God Himself, not one which he had constructed or could organize. In these, as in the Church of Jerusalem, we hear of the Elder and of the Deacon. But their existence is taken for granted. No formal account is given of their creation. They have unfolded themselves like any trees or flowers in the outward world. They have not been put into the society, according to any plan or paper constitution. The other name of "Overseers," which becomes so important afterwards, stands out with no formality or distinctness in the Ecclesiastical Epistles. The name itself is pregnant with meaning; but the meaning is not brought out. We feel that we are in an order; but an order that is in the midst of another, which it is not yet in a condition to displace, and which, till it perishes

by God's decree, is dear and venerable in the eyes of the Apostle of the Gentiles, as well as of the Apostles of the circumsision.

The conclusion then to which I come, is this. There is nothing in the Epistles to the Churches, and I think we shall find that there is nothing in the pastoral Epistles, which anticipates the existence of that complete and expanded society which we meet with, after the Apostles have left the earth. But there are all the seeds and preparations for that developed order, just as we found the seeds of the different kinds of Gnosticism that were afterwards developed, at Colosse. The pastoral Epistles carry us a step farther than the Ecclesiastical Epistles in the history of the Church's constitution. But it is just such a step as is made necessary by what we read there, just such a step as makes the facts which we read of in the second century, not incredible or unintelligible.

FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

It is generally admitted that the Overseer and the Elder are not distinguished with any accuracy in the Acts of the Apostles or in the Ecclesiastical Epistles. But when a certain person is left to watch over the affairs of the Church, we feel at once that the first name has an appropriateness to his function which the other clearly has not. Without assuming that the Elder had necessarily any connection with age, we may at least take it for granted that a young man like Timothy would not have borne that name, in a Church to which he locally belonged. At the same time, the opening of this Epistle affords the clearest evidence in support of the remark which I made just now, that the offices in the Church evolved themselves by a divine law, not in obedience to an artificial rule.

The Apostle is on his way from Ephesus to Macedonia. He perceives, in the Church at Ephesus, certain persons who are introducing strange doctrines, who are giving heed to fables and interminable genealogies which awaken disputations. He desires Timothy to remain that he may warn these men of the mischief of which they are likely to be the cause. Here we have at once the indication, in a particular case, how the need of a Christian overseer might arise. Starting from this point we may expect to learn by degrees what other duties devolve upon him, what else is implied in his office.

The phrase "interminable genealogies" has been supposed to lead us to a step further into the history of Gnosticism, than we advanced in the Epistle to the Colossians. The descent of the different æons and their spiritual relationships to each other, form so conspicuous a part of the heresies of the second century, that we assume at once that they must be pointed at here. The opinion seems to me not an unreasonable one. But the language of the Apostle in the context obliges us to check and qualify it. These genealogists were evidently Jews, men who

set great store by the law. If they owed any thing to Persian or Greek teachers, that lore was entirely subordinate to what they received from the Hebrew sages. We should then, I think, interpret the words rather by what we know of Jewish conceits concerning angels and archangels, than by what we read of Gnostics in Tertullian or Irenæus. Possibly we may hereafter find it needful to make much more account of the Jewish element in Gnosticism, than some modern ecclesiastical historians are inclined to do. But at all events the persons whom St. Paul set Timothy to control, were men who substituted law for Gospel, and thereby, as St. Paul tells him, "hindered that which is the true end and issue of the commandment, love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned."

The words which we translate, "godly edifying which is in faith," are made rather more difficult by Lachmann, who reads *οἰκονομίαν* instead of *οἰκοδομίαν*. But either reading, Lachmann's perhaps even more than the ordinary one, suggests a valuable hint as to the character of Timothy's office, which is abundantly borne out by the rest of the Epistle. The preservation of the order of the Church, of all that conduced to the true fellowship of its members, was to be his first and his special object. He was to understand distinctions, that he might be a preserver of unity; to hinder notions from substituting themselves for belief and action; for that end to detect what is true in each notion, that the assumption and exclusiveness which made it false might be rejected. The great cardinal opposition of Law and Gospel immediately supplies the instance and the test. "The Law is good, if a man use it lawfully." But the Law is for the coercion and condemnation of crimes which counteract and oppose the healthful doctrine of the Gospel of the glory of God, with which the Apostle felt that he had been entrusted. To substitute the mere denunciation and prohibition of evil for the power by which men are delivered from it, the righteousness of letters for the righteousness of a Person, the righteousness which merely condemns the sinner for the righteousness which saves him out of sin, is to destroy the life of the Church as well as the life of the

individual. He who truly watches over one, will be also the protector of the other.

Then after the assertion of this great theological principle, which Timothy is always to keep in sight, comes in one of those passages of personal feeling and thanksgiving which seem at first to break the tenor of the discourse, but which afterwards we find have done more to bring out the meaning of it, than the most apparent logical sequence could have done. He "thanks our Lord Jesus Christ, who has enabled him for the ministry into which He put him, having judged him faithful; him that was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious." Why should these words come in here, more than anywhere else? Why should he speak of his receiving mercy because he did it ignorantly in unbelief? Why should he say that the grace of our Lord had abounded with the faith and love that is in Christ Jesus? Why should he add the saying, apparently more needful for a young convert than for a bishop, "Faithful is the word, and worthy of universal acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am first?" Why, but because in this way he brings out most remarkably the inefficiency of the Law, to raise a man who followed its precepts most diligently, out of the most evil and godless habits of mind, to which he yielded through his very zeal for its authority? Why, but because he would show the power of the Gospel to do that for him which the Law could not do? Why, but because he would proclaim to the whole body of sinners, the blessings to which he felt that he had no right but as a sinner? And so the words that follow, "But on this account I found mercy, that in me first Christ Jesus might show forth all longsuffering for a pattern to them that should hereafter believe on Him unto life eternal," acquire their full force. He himself is at once the sign to the most hard-hearted legalist, and the most corrupt Gentile, of the power which there is in Christ to raise them out of both conditions, to endue them with a faith and love which is in Himself, and so to bring them to that life eternal, which men crave for, and which they find in Him. And I know not whether it is an

over-refinement to think that both in the use of these words, "eternal life," and in the ascription which follows, "to the King of the Æons, to the incorruptible, unseen, only God, honor and glory for the æons out of æons, Amen," there is a silent allusion to the opinions which were beginning to connect themselves with these words in the Church, and at the same time a striking testimony against them, inasmuch as the Apostle draws away all thoughts both from periods and from spiritual beings, to the one original ground of both. Be that as it may, the commission to Timothy evidently rests upon this Gospel and the relation between it and the law, as it was made necessary by the confused teaching of Rabbinical speculators and allegorists. The words, "according to the prophecies which went before on thee"—or rather that were leading or pointing to thee—seem to express clearly that the Apostle was not exercising an arbitrary judgment in the choice of his delegate, but was conforming himself to indications and admonitions which, in the case of every man if he will look for them, declare what he is intended for, and which an Apostle could never regard as otherwise than divine. I cannot tell how to explain the words, "in them" which occur in the next sentence. They may possibly signify that Timothy should carry on his warfare in the recollection of those warnings and fore-showings of his vocation; that he would need them when his belief of it was growing weak. But at any rate the words will signify that his life in himself and in the Church could be nothing else than a fight, and that the fight would be victorious, if he put on the armor of faith and of a good conscience, one of which he intimates is necessary to the security and preservation of the other. He had perceived a tendency to separate them, growing up in the Church. Hymenæus and Alexander had neglected to keep a clear conscience; therefore their faith had run aground, and they had been shipwrecked. He had delivered them to Satan (using the same formula, doubtless with precisely the same meaning, as in the case of the Corinthian offender), not in this case or in any other that they might be excluded from the kingdom of Heaven, but that they might be taught not to blaspheme.

Our second chapter opens with hints respecting the order of a Church. Nothing is more worthy of note than the Apostle's primary exhortation to Timothy on this subject: "I exhort then first of all that there be made petitions, supplications, thanksgivings for all men." The ground of the Church's order is laid in these supplications. He who is left expressly at Ephesus to watch against strange doctrines, is yet bidden "first of all" to see that prayers be made for all men. If the Apostle's end had been only to prevent the incursions of Gnoticism, no diviner means than this could have been conceived. For Gnosticism is, in its very nature, separating and exclusive, busy in dividing the initiated believer from the ordinary Christian and man. But as the Apostle's zeal against the innovating teachers was altogether subordinate to the purpose of asserting the truth of the Gospel and the existence of the divine kingdom, we cannot assign any lower ground for this command and for the prominence which he gives to it, than that he looked upon common and united prayer for all men as the very expression of the Church's mind, the sign of its vocation, the mode by which its triumphs were to be effected. He adds, "For kings and all those in authority, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all piety and reverence." But lest this explanation of the prayer should be mistaken for the reason and ground of it,—lest Christians should suppose that they were praying for Nero in order to disarm his hostility against them, or to procure themselves an immunity from the miseries which he was inflicting upon the world,—the Apostle adds immediately, "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of our Saviour God, who willeth all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth." A most wonderful and startling assertion, the strangeness of which we can hardly appreciate. You are to pray for all men; you are to pray for the worst man, the greatest tyrant; for this is—not proper and decorous in the sight of men, but—good and acceptable in the sight of God, who hates all mere appearances and proprieties; because it is His will that *all* men should be saved, and should come to a knowledge of the truth. He must mean that the prayers of a Church,

and therefore the life of a Church,—which depends on its prayers, which is realized in its prayers,—are possible only while it acknowledges a Will to good, a Will to salvation which goes down deeper than any thing Christians can think or imagine, which is so profound, that we are bound to suppose the whole world, and the very worst man in it, to be an object of the divine care and interest, and therefore a fit object for the care and interest of those whose wills are seeking to be in conformity with His. And lest it should be supposed that this Will of God was some other than that which Paul had been proclaiming in his Gospel, he adds, "For there is one God, one Mediator also of God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, He that hath given Himself a ransom for all (the testimony to be made in its own times, or, as our translators render it, "to be testified in due time"); unto which have I been appointed a herald and an apostle. I say truth, I do not lie, a teacher of nations in faith and truth." That Will of God then that all men should be saved, is the Will that is revealed in the one Mediator Jesus Christ. When we speak of Him as a Mediator or a ransom, we speak of this or we speak of nothing. He is a ransom for all, or He is a ransom for none. If any person is excluded, the Incarnation and the Sacrifice mean nothing: there is no Gospel from heaven to earth. Therefore the Apostle speaks in that vehement way, to which all who know his style are aware that he resorts only when some great cardinal point is at stake, when the matter at issue is one of life and death. He avers, he swears, that he is not a liar, but a truth-speaker, when he says that this, even this Gospel, so contrary to all the narrow notions of men, so utterly outrageous to the pride of Jews and of Christians, is the glad tidings with which he has been entrusted, that if he may not say this, he is not a teacher of the Gentiles at all. Such language is not new to us. We have found it in every Epistle. But here it comes out more broadly and distinctly than in almost any other place, because he would have Timothy understand that if he does not set forth this as the ground of the acts and life of the Ephesian Church, he will be failing in his office, he will not be a true overseer.

And then he goes on to exhibit this united prayer, as that which is to preserve the men and the women of the Church in their proper relation to each other, uniting them together in Christ, but yet teaching them the Divine and original distinction between them, the subordination which is due from the weaker to the stronger. He wills "that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands without wrath and disputation;" these being *their* special temptations—springing up as readily in the Church as in the world, from questions of theology as from questions of civil business, to be cured only by the awfulness and the fellowship of prayer. He wills also that the women should join in these prayers, avoiding those outward vanities of dress which were *their* special temptation, which interfered with the humility and the reverence of prayer, and from which the cultivation of that reverence in prayer, and those higher adornments and graces which are sought for and obtained in it, are the deliverance. But the woman also might have another infirmity, arising not from that which belongs to her own sex, but from the ambition of being like the other. She was to pray with the man. There they were one and equal. But he was to teach and she to learn. Quietness was her special ornament. Adam was first formed, and then Eve. The woman was deceived; the man fell by yielding to her. Yet that promise of a child, which was the deliverance of the first woman, shall be a deliverance and blessing to all who follow her, if they remain in faith, and love, and holiness, with modesty.*

* The words διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας (through the child-bearing), would not seem to imply that she should be saved in the act of child-bearing, but that the gift of a child should be a means of her salvation. This sense of the passage would be consistent with the context. The promise of a Seed to the woman was given in connection with the promise of offspring. However Eve might mistake her firstborn for the deliverer, she surely learnt the mystery of a higher life than her own, through the experience of a mother. To say that the curse of bringing forth children in sorrow is turned into a spiritual and divine blessing to all her descendants who will so receive it, was a message worthy of an Apostle, and one which belongs to this place, where he is proclaiming the intellectual dignity of the man, and yet vindicating a distinct

After laying down these fundamental principles respecting the constitution of the Church, the Apostle proceeds to speak of the office of him who was to be its guardian. I suppose most persons who have read the description of a Christian overseer or bishop in the third chapter, have been somewhat startled at finding that the ideal is not more elevated, that the qualities which are described are in the main such as one would demand of an ordinary superintendent of a village or a city, not those spiritual and transcendant qualities which we suppose must have belonged to an ecclesiastical ruler in Apostolical primitive times. I think much is to be learnt from this observation. If the Apostle had been setting up an order which was to be separated from the world, and to propose to itself objects with which the world had nothing to do, the commonplace morality which forbids a ruler to be "a striker, given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre," would have been passed over, or taken for granted. Only those tokens which mark the divine, abstracted, spiritual man, would have been dwelt upon. If, on the contrary, the Apostle believed that he was speaking of a society which God was setting up in the world, and not he, which was to explain what human society is, which was to be a light of the world, and salt of the earth, he would rather take for granted the internal and spiritual qualities which were presumed in the very nature of the society, and in its

glory to the woman, one in some sense connecting her more directly, than the man is connected, with humanity and with Him who is the head of it. The writer of this Epistle, and of the Epistle to the Corinthians, was not likely to maintain that the pains of a mother are the only, or the necessary means of a woman's spiritual education; he has sufficiently asserted the blessings which are bestowed upon single women who seek to serve the Lord. But it is most desirable, if the Redemption of mankind is a fact, if we are not to attribute the continuance of the race to the Devil, that the other truth should not be concealed. I desire to thank a noble-hearted and pure-minded writer of our day for the courage with which she has illustrated the doctrine, διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας σωθήσεται (through the child-bearing shall she be saved), in the story of one of her sex who had fallen into evil. I allude to the beautiful tale of "Ruth," which on this point and on all others is, I think, as true to human experience as it is to the divinest morality.

relation to the eternal invisible God, and would explain to him who governed its members and directed its proceedings, how he might in his own person exhibit that simple, broad, manly character, which the world honors, but which it cannot produce, how in his daily walk he might prove to men that there is another life than an animal one,—another end of existence than the acquisition of money,—a power which can restrain passion, not in those who cultivate apathy or indifference, but in those who eschew it, and are full of burning zeal. Probably if we considered the history of the Church a little more, we should find that the preservation of this kind of gracious, orderly, humane demeanor, in the midst of the provocations and degrading influences of society, has been harder work, more rarely performed, more mighty in its influence, bringing less honor to man—greater glory to God—than the maintenance of that separate and ascetic devotion which is often set up in disparagement of it. There are those who have been called, like Bernard, to the other kind of service, and they are entitled to all admiration, gratitude and love. Between the dangers of the two positions there may be little to choose. He who rushes into either, without a vocation, may have bitterly to repent his rashness. But it must be a great mistake, in the face of the Apostle's teaching, to maintain that he who can order God's household, and can preserve in it the character of a Christian family, is not bearing at least as true a witness for His kingdom, as those who retire from the haunts of men, and beget the impression that heaven is for solitaries, and not for society. If people would read the Epistles literally, and not bring their own notions with them, it would be almost needless to make another remark closely connected with this, that the Apostle does not merely permit, but command, that the Overseers should be taken from those who are already husbands and fathers. I see no way of avoiding this inference from his words. And I believe the further we read in ecclesiastical history, the more we shall find the explanation of the command in the nature, functions, and temptations of the office.

Those who have accepted the maxim that there are three

orders in the Church, merely as a maxim, without much considering what is implied in it, are puzzled by finding no allusion to the presbyter here, the Apostle at once passing from the overseer to the deacon. I am anxious to draw attention to this point, in which I feel much interest, precisely because I attach very great importance to the office of the presbyter, and because I do *not* think that the ordinary objections, which are raised against the opinion that his office in the developed Christian Church is the expansion and flower of the office of the Jewish priest, are tenable objections. I hail the omission of any allusion to him in this place, as proof that, while the Jewish polity was standing, while sacrifices were still offered daily in the Temple, his office, —though existing in the Church, though possessing a much more domestic character than the Jewish office, from which it was translated,—had not acquired its full meaning, had, as yet, more to do with the arrangements and discipline of the Church than with its worship. I believe it is a confirmation of remarks which I have made before in commenting on the Epistle to the Hebrews, and to which I shall have again to call the attention of my readers, when, at the close of this volume, I connect that Epistle with the Epistles to the churches in the Gentile cities. But I must not leave this subject without observing that the allusions to the deacons, are conceived in precisely the same spirit as those respecting the overseers. They all betoken the existence of a Divine order, but of one which, because it is Divine, is also human and *natural*, so far as natural is opposed to artificial. The deacon is to be tested before he is admitted to the office, and one of the chief tests is that he be the husband of one wife, ruling his children and his own house well. His wife also is a part of the Church order. Her gravity, sobriety, freedom from gossiping, are taken to be the signs of a divine calling. In both cases, as throughout the New Testament, work or service is not considered chiefly as a means to a reward, but as itself a reward. He who does a less work well, may hope for a wider sphere of work. But to be discharged from work in this world or any other, would be a penalty, not a prize.

The memorable passage in the 16th verse of the 3d chapter has been the subject of infinite disputation, a disputation, on one side, surely most unnecessary. Those who feel that the Bible, from beginning to end, is setting forth the manifestation of God in Christ Jesus, can scarcely be very solicitous whether the word θεὸς occurs here or not. Perhaps, if it does not, they are justified in connecting it with "the living God" in the 15th verse, regarding what comes between as parenthetical. Perhaps it may be right, in spite of grammar, to connect it with "*mystery*," though then the use of the masculine should be explained. Perhaps "*Christ*" may be understood, and the relative used, however strangely, for the demonstrative. In no way can the evidence of the doctrine depend upon this passage. In every way it must bear witness of some divine mystery that "was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up into glory." And, since such language is utterly monstrous and unreasonable, except in reference to a person, those who believe the mystery at all, will identify it with a person. What, I conceive, is much more important than any of this word-fighting, is the Apostle's assertion that the Church is a Church of the living God, and that being so, the truth upon which it stands, and of which it is the pillar, is the truth of the union of flesh and spirit, of the visible and invisible, of the human and divine.

The immediate reference after these words to those who in the latter times would revolt from the faith, explains, I think, the character of the teaching which St. Paul dreaded in the Ephesian Church, and how he desired Timothy to counteract it. To some it may seem that the doctrines which he speaks of, the forbidding to marry, and the commanding to abstain from meats, are not worthy of the strong language which he applies to them, and could scarcely be the tokens of a coming apostasy. But when one connects them with all that the Apostle has been saying previously, and especially with these last words, one perceives that any thing which put contempt upon human relationships, or led men to think that the earth had not been redeemed,

was in fact a denial that Christ had been manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, received up into glory; it was a denial of the Gospel with which the Apostle was entrusted; it destroyed the very meaning and life of the Church, which existed to bear witness of the reconciliation between heaven and earth. And such a revolt from the Christian faith implied also a denial of the great truth which the Jewish people had been set apart to proclaim, nay, of every truth which was implied in the existence of civil polity among the nations of the world. If every creature of God is not good, if we may not give thanks to God for it, if it is not made holy by his word and prayer—the evil of it being not in the things, but in our selfish appropriation of them—then the earth is the devil's property. Christ's baptism and temptation and agony and bloody sweat have not taken it out of his hands. Every part of the Apostle's exhortations, inasmuch as they have been showing how a truly heavenly society must be a truly earthly society, how there can be no inward spiritual root from which the fruits of common social morality do not proceed, had been striking at these errors. He now bids his son Timothy openly to denounce them as profane and old wives' fables. But that he may do so with effect, that he may put down all these mock forms of piety, he must nerve and exercise himself to real piety, which has the promise of the life that is now, and of the coming life. I need not stop to remark that St. Paul is not in these words preaching the doctrine which he believed devoutly while he was a Pharisee, which he had renounced ever since it pleased God to reveal His Son in him, that men are paid for their piety to God by certain prizes in this world, and by a still larger reversionary interest in the world to come. His piety to God was itself the entering into possession of a life—a divine life, which is now, and is to go on hereafter. He exercised himself, he bade his son Timothy exercise himself, in faith, and trust in a God, "who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those who trust in Him." For this he labored and agonized, because he hoped in the living God, this Saviour of all. To keep up that hope he had to fight with principalities and powers in high places.

It was the cause of all the enmity of those who cast out his name as evil.

The exhortations which follow belong to Church-order and government, and will be understood and appreciated, I apprehend, best by those whose experience has been longest, even though their lot may have been cast in some commercial city of the west, not in Ephesus,—in the 19th century, not in the first. Timothy is bidden not to let any one despise his youth, to remember the gift that was in him, which was conferred upon him through prophecy, with laying on of hands of the presbytery. Having this gift, he can be a pattern of the believers in word, in conversation, in love, in faith, in purity. He can devote himself to reading, to exhortation, to instruction; he can meditate in these things, dwell in them; so that his progress will become manifest to all. He is to exhort elder men as fathers, younger men as brethren, elder women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity. He is to have a great respect for the true widow; but he is not to provide for them, if they have children or descendants who can take care of them. To do that is an acceptable thing in the sight of God. There were to be no "Corbans" in the Christian Church. If any one did not take care of his own house, and especially of his relations, he had denied the faith, and was worse than an infidel. Timothy was to have no respect for people who professed a great deal of zeal for the Church's work, and did not see after their own. For this reason the younger widows were not to be generally used for the service of the Church. They were apt to be idle, and triflers, and gossips. It was much better for the younger women (even, it would appear from the context, for the younger widows,) to marry, to bring forth children to rule their households. The elders who had well presided over the Church (here we have the name, and an allusion, though not a very distinct one, to a special kind of government) should be held worthy of a double honor, that is, I conceive, of some pecuniary provision, as well as of mere respect, for he quotes the Scripture, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn."

The discipline of offenders is then touched upon. No accusation against an elder is to be entertained, except in the presence of two or three witnesses. Offenders are to be rebuked openly before all, that the rest may fear. Timothy is solemnly adjured to remember these precepts. He is standing in the presence of God, and of Jesus Christ, and the elect angels; how dares he let any prejudice or partiality intrude into his decisions? Here we have another specimen of the way in which the spiritual principle of the Church, the faith that men are actually brought into the presence of God, and into the invisible world, becomes the security for ordinary human justice. And we cannot too often repeat the remark, that, whenever churches or churchmen forget or disbelieve the truth of their high calling, and the fact of God's continual judgment of their reins and hearts, they become immeasurably *more* unjust, *more* partial, *more* utterly unprincipled, than states or statesmen are when they are at their very worst. Nay, they become the corrupters of states and statesmen, or else, while *they* retain any sense of their moral obligations, incur their righteous reproofs, and their bitter contempt. Therefore we should pray to fall into the hands of any judicature rather than a religious judicature, unless it is really possessed by the truth which St. Paul here inculcates, with such awful gravity, upon the bishop of Ephesus. He is further told not to lay hands suddenly upon any one, however eager he may be to send forth laborers into the harvest; for so he is making himself partaker of other men's sins. Their false teachings and evil examples become his. He is to keep himself pure, and he is to be careful of the health of his body as well as of his spirit. How the following passage is connected with this I am not able to say, nor do I see clearly what it means. It might seem to indicate that all bodily weaknesses are in some sense the tokens of evils within; but that those in whom they come out and manifest themselves, are in no wise worse or more hardly treated, than those whose evils are not brought to light before the world. There is the same righteous judgment in all cases, the same revelation, by one means or other, to the man himself of what he is. This

might be a needful comfort to Timothy, whose bodily weaknesses perhaps discouraged him, and, since they interfered with his activity, appeared to be sentences of God against him. Both the good and evil deeds of men, St. Paul would seem to say, come forth into manifestation before the day in which all secrets are revealed. And since that which doth make manifest is light, we are to receive such discoveries as coming from Him who is light. I do not affirm that this is the Apostle's meaning; but I have not perceived any other, which is equally natural in this place.

Then arose those questions which were perpetually tormenting the early Church concerning the master and slave. I shall allude to that subject again, when I speak of the Epistle to Philemon. Here the principle of Divine order, which would be ultimately the great principle of civil freedom, is asserted. Let the Christian slave pay all respect and honor to the heathen master out of reverence to the name of God and His doctrine. Let the Christian slave pay to the Christian master all the more honor because they are brethren. Then their services become mutual services, benefits received and returned; that becomes a relation which was a bondage.

These plain practical exhortations St. Paul speaks of as healthy words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, the doctrine according to godliness. Those who set themselves against this teaching, who have another more refined Christianity, he treats with very little ceremony. Such men are puffed up; they have no real knowledge; they have a diseased love for controversies and word-fightings; out of which, he says, spring envy, disputation, evil suspicions, the busy altercations of men who are corrupted in reason and alienated from the truth, who suppose godliness to be gain. He dwells upon this charge. He evidently feels that he has touched the very root of the evil which he desires Timothy to extirpate from the Church of Ephesus. In that rich trading city, notions connected with trade were sure to mingle themselves with all the thoughts of Christian men. St. Paul, in his allusions to the bonded goods and the seal, had shown how they might be turned to spiritual profit. But they could and would

be turned to a very opposite use, they could and would infect all the visions of the spiritual world, and so would make it utterly powerless for the reformation of the visible world. The fine Gnostical speculators were, in truth, *trading* speculators. They were teaching men how they were to get a greater return for the sacrifices that they made, than other men, how by pursuing certain trains of thought, or observing certain outward rules, they might increase their felicity in this or the other world. The Apostle admits that godliness is great gain when it is accompanied with contentment. The poorest man, with his food and clothing, has an infinite treasure. Though we come with nothing into the world, and can carry nothing out, we may have God for our eternal portion. "But those who will be rich," he says, "fall into a temptation and a snare, and many lusts that are foolish and mischievous, which drown men in ruin and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, through aiming at which some have wandered away from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows." The reader is familiar with this language. But has he considered it, in connection with the warnings against false teachers which precede it, and with the whole tenor of the Epistle? Has he perceived that the love of money is not only the root of all evil, because it draws men away from the spiritual world, but because it leads them to make that spiritual world a mere collection of prizes which they are to pursue and appropriate, so that selfishness becomes the law as much of heaven as of earth?

"But thou, O man of God," he goes on, "fly these things. But pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness." These are the prizes of the kingdom of heaven; these are the treasures that are brought near to men, and which St. Paul called upon his dear son as a man to claim for himself and for his brethren. "Fight," he says, "the good fight of faith." Believe earnestly that these constitute God's own nature, and that He bestows them in Christ upon you. "Lay hold of eternal life," the life of a spirit, the life of a man, the life which is opposed to that of an animal, to that of time or sense. Lay hold upon it, for

you have been called to it, and you have confessed the good confession that it is yours before many witnesses. And you are not the first who witnessed this good confession. "Christ Jesus witnessed it before Pontius Pilate. Therefore I call upon you as in His sight, and the sight of that God who quickeneth the dead, to keep the commandment spotless, faultless until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, that manifestation which He will make in His own fit time, who is the blessed and only ruler, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, who dwelleth in light inaccessible, whom no man hath seen or can see, to whom be honor and eternal power. Amen."

Here as in every other rhapsody of the Apostle, the practical end is never for one moment forgotten. He is still applying the most direct remedy to a direct and gross evil. This declaration of the heavenly wealth, of the wonderful and unutterable treasures which are laid up in God, and which belong to the spirit of man, terminates in the exhortation from which it should never be separated; "The rich in this world command not to have proud thoughts; nor to hope in the uncertainty of wealth, but in the God who giveth to us all things richly for enjoyment; to do good, to be rich in noble works, to be ready in giving, communicating; treasuring up for themselves a good foundation for the future, that they may have hold of that which is truly life." Here is the proper earthly sequel to his vision of heavenly things.

And then the whole epistle is wound up with an exhortation to Timothy himself, which makes us feel what perfect unity there is in it, how the purpose which the apostle set before himself at the commencement, has been present with him to the end. "Oh Timothy, preserve the trust that has been given thee, turning away from the profane empty talkings and oppositions of that which is falsely called knowledge, which some professing, have gone astray about faith."

SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

The second Epistle to Timothy has a somewhat more personal character than the first—personal in reference both to the writer and the receiver of it. But all the indications respecting the Church of Ephesus are similar to those which we have noticed already; only that the Apostle's sense of evils arising out of the false teaching which he had denounced to that Church and to all the churches, is keener and more distinctly expressed.

The passage from the third verse of the first chapter to the fifteenth, would seem to indicate that there had been great discouragement in the mind of Timothy, and something perhaps of the timidity which is a natural result of discouragement. According to the rule in all his letters the apostle dwells first upon the tokens which he had given of faith and earnestness, and strengthens him by the examples of his mother and grandmother; before he hints at all his infirmities. But neither his early zeal, nor the lessons he had received from others, could enable him to sustain his position at Ephesus. St. Paul reminds him of the gift of God that is in him by the laying on of his hands. He would have him recollect that he has received a Spirit, and that it is not a Spirit of cowardice, but of power and love and a sound mind. In the assurance that he has that mighty Friend and Helper with him, he can bid him "not to be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of himself His bondsman, but to be a fellow-sufferer in the Gospel in the strength of God, who hath saved us and hath called us with a holy calling, a calling and salvation not depending on our works, but upon His own purpose and grace that was given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began;* but has now been manifested through the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, Him who has destroyed death,

* I leave our translation, not caring to enter here into a discussion of the words *πρὸ Χρόνων αἰωνίων*, (before evil times), which, with a multitude of similar expressions, deserve, and I hope will receive, sometime a very full examination.

and brought to light life and immortality through the Gospel." I apprehend we have never felt the force of these words, or the relation in which the different parts of the message stand to each other — what need there was for the Apostle to speak of a purpose before time, what need to speak of a manifestation in time, what need to dwell upon a calling and salvation which do not depend upon men's acts, but are the origin of them, what the death is which Christ has destroyed, what the life and immortality are which He has brought to light —until we have connected them with the feebleness and despondency of a minister of Christ's Gospel, and have seen how the omission of any clause would have been a loss to him, of something which he needed to preserve him from utter hopelessness. And then come in, as always, the Apostle's own experience and sympathy. He too is a herald, an apostle, a teacher of this Gospel like his son Timothy; he too is a sufferer for it; he too has all temptations to be ashamed of it. "But he knows in whom he has believed, and is persuaded that he is able to keep that trust which he has received against that day."* Let him keep before him the wholesome words which he has heard from him, interpreting them by the faith and the love which is in Christ Jesus. Let him too keep the goodly trust which is committed to him by the power of the holy Spirit that dwelt in them both.

One cause of Timothy's depression is indicated in the next paragraph. There had been a general defection from the Apostle among his disciples in Asia. Two especially are mentioned. The Apostle trembles and hopes for another (Onesiphorus) who had often both in Rome and Ephesus stood by him bravely. But whatever others might do, he beseeches his own son to be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus, and he would have him commit to faithful men, who would be fit to

* *τὴν παραθήκην μου* (my deposit). We translate, "That which I have committed to him." Is it not rather that which He has committed to me? Does not this rendering connect the Apostle's own faith better with his exhortation to Timothy? "I cannot take care of this mighty stewardship which God has given me; but He can and will."

teach others, the words which he had heard from him. He must remember that he is a soldier of Christ, and is to suffer with his Captain. To please Him he must not involve himself with any worldly traffic, which would interfere with his warfare. Or let him think of himself as a wrestler ; then there is no crown for him unless he wrestles according to the rules of the games. Or let him consider himself a husbandman ; then let him recollect that the fruits which ripen under his hands he ought himself to be a partaker of. These were parables which he must lay to heart, God would give him understanding to see the meaning and moral of them. Let him ever keep in mind what Paul's Gospel had been, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, of Jesus Christ who is risen from the dead ; or rather let him keep Him in mind Then he would understand how the servant suffered as a malefactor, for the Master had so suffered. Then he would understand that the word of God is not bound because he who utters it is in bonds. Then he would understand too the great reward of suffering. He suffered for the sake of the elect, that they also might obtain the salvation that is in Jesus Christ with eternal glory. The word may be trusted. Fellow-suffering is the way to fellow-life. If we endure with Him, we shall share His kingdom. If we deny Him, He will deny us. But our faithlessness will not make Him unfaithful ; for He cannot deny Himself.

These grand maxims and proverbs for the Christian minister himself, were also those of which he was to bear witness as in Christ's sight, to other men. He beseeches him again to have nothing to do with word-fighting. He was to try to present himself as an approved *workman* to God. Not that words were not very sacred. He had a word of truth which he was to divide accurately and rightly, not to set up one part of it against the other. Those who used words for the opposite purpose were cultivating impiety. Their words became mere vain talk, nay, they became cancers that destroyed life instead of nourishing it. For instance, Hymenæus and Philetus had become gossips and arguers about the resurrection, and so, perverting the Apostle's own words, had represented that there was no future resurrection.

But all this did not weaken the foundation which God had laid. And there were two great practical rules for themselves, "God knoweth them that are His," and, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." The first would prevent them from judging others ; the second would tell them their own privilege and duty. Timothy had no reason to be discouraged if he found in God's house what he would find in every other great house, vessels of precious and of worthless materials, vessels turned to honorable and to dishonorable uses. Each man had to see that he was purified from that which was base, that he was a vessel sanctified for that which was honorable, that he was useful to the Master, that he was prepared for every good work. Let Timothy avoid the youthful lusts which deprave the man, let him pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart. Let him have as little as possible to do with foolish questions, even in the way of arguing with them ; for all these things generate strifes. And the servant of God should not be striving (this we may suspect was one of Timothy's youthful infirmities and temptations) ; but should be mild to all, ready to teach, bearing evil, in meekness instructing those that set themselves in opposition, in case God may give them repentance unto the acknowledgment of the truth, and that those may escape out of the snare of the devil who had been led captive by him and are fulfilling his will.

It is no part however of St. Paul's encouragement to Timothy to tell him that he would not have these adversaries to encounter, or that bright times were immediately at hand. On the contrary, he tells him that bad times are at hand. It is impossible, even if we had not his hints in his other Epistles, to doubt that the last days he speaks of here, are days which Timothy was beginning to experience, and which he would have to experience more and more. The men who were to be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, braggarts, proud, evil speakers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, who were to have the form of godliness, but to deny its power, were men from whom Timothy was to turn himself away. So graphically indeed does he describe them, that

every age has been certain, and has had a right to be certain, that they applied to itself. Always there have been those religious teachers who "creep into houses and lead captive silly women, laden with sins, led about with divers lusts, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." This has been the trade of Romish and of Protestant deceivers. Among women of this kind they have found their most profitable converts. But because the lesson is a universal one, and capable of innumerable applications, it is not the less true that it belonged specially to that time, and that every thing which St. Paul said was realized by his own son in his own Ephesian Church, that every event which it prognosticated came to pass in that generation. It was Timothy who had need to be reminded of the old traditions of his country respecting the magicians who withstood Moses, Timothy who had need to be assured that the new enchanter would be discomfited like the old, Timothy who had need to be reminded that his master and father had not, like these men, crept into houses, or courted popularity among silly women, but had believed, loved, suffered, been persecuted wheresoever he went. It was Timothy who had need to be reminded that he should abide in the things which he had learnt, and that he should still look to those holy Scriptures which he had known from a child, to make him wise unto salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus. It was Timothy who had need to be told that every inspired writing is also useful for instruction, for conviction, for restoration, for education in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, fitted for every good work.*

* It is often said that this—the natural and obvious rendering of the words—merely gives birth to an idle truism unworthy of an apostle. I conceive it is no truism at all, but a *truth*, specially needful for Timothy and for all teachers, who like him, know the Scriptures by heart, and take their inspiration for granted. Ministers of God need to be reminded that these Scriptures are not merely to be quoted or spoken of as divinely given oracles, but that they are also useful for the most direct and practical purposes, that they are to be studied earnestly and in their connection, by every one who would instruct, convict, educate. Do we know these things? Happy are we if we do them! Happy are we if we do not profane Scripture, by turning it into a

The Apostle is so convinced that a time was at hand when members of churches "would not bear sound teaching, but according to their own lusts would heap to themselves teachers having a perpetual and restless itching to hear, but turning their ears from the truth to fables," that he uses one of his most solemn adjurations to Timothy to "preach the word, to be instant in season, out of season, to reprove, rebuke, exhort; to be sober in all things, to suffer evil, to do the work of an evangelist, thoroughly to fulfil his ministry." There is still another reason for this exhortation. The Apostle thinks that he has nearly finished his own fight; his race is almost won. He is looking forward to a crown which now, as always, is not a crown *for* righteousness, but a crown *of* righteousness. That which he said to the Philippians he was pursuing after, he hopes fully to attain; to dwell altogether in the righteousness of God, absolutely and for ever to be delivered from his own. This crown which he has longed for, which God has held out to him, he believes the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give him in that day when He is revealed. But he will give it also—for how can he bear to think of such a possession as a selfish one?—to all those who love His appearing. Even with this prospect in sight he has a craving for human sympathy. He longs to see Timothy; he mourns for the loss of Demas, wishes for Mark (probably that very John Mark, on account of whom he had separated from Barnabas), and speaks sorrowfully, though not bitterly, of his loneliness as far as earthly sympathy went, when he made his first defence before the Emperor. There is an allusion, among these notices of friends, to an enemy, Alexander the coppersmith, of whom Timothy had need to beware. The apparent severity of the parenthesis which accompanies the mention of him, entirely disappears if we adopt Lachmann's reading, "The Lord

book of texts, which every one is to receive as authoritative, though no attempt is made to discover their sense, though they are utterly turned from their plain sense! Happy are we if we do not use the inspired writings not to instruct, convince, reform, but to darken counsel, to silence reprovers, to perpetuate abuses, to blind and stupefy the conscience!

will reward him according to his works." Not that there is any real severity in desiring that the law, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap," should accomplish itself in every case. If there was any thing right or true in Alexander, the righteous Judge would acknowledge that right and truth. What there was false, what set itself against the truth, what obstructed it in him or in others, the same righteous Judge would destroy. It was fitting that an Apostle who had fought the good fight and was about to be offered up, should desire that in that, and in all things, God's will should be done on earth as it is in heaven.

EPISTLE TO TITUS.

THE Church at Ephesus must be always more interesting to us than the Church in Crete, of which we know nothing from the Acts of the Apostles, and very little from any later history. The Epistle to Titus gives a few, not very agreeable, hints respecting the character of the islanders, which here, as elsewhere, was represented in the character of the Church. If we had only the one passage which teaches us how much the Apostle studied the condition of every people to whom he went, and how sure he was that every national and tribe peculiarity would affect the faith and conduct of those who confess Christ and would require to be watched by His ministers, the Epistle would be of exceeding value as correcting a great many of our confused notions, and as an interpreter of the experience of the pastor and of the missionary. A certain notion that the Christian man, if he is indeed born from above, has nothing to do with his own past life or with the life of the people to whom he belongs, that he is translated into a different state, and that there is not an especial temperament and constitution which he inherits from his ancestors, is continually alternating with practical discoveries which confute it, and which grievously embarrass him who has entertained it. It should therefore be carefully remembered that there are few letters which speak so much of the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the holy Spirit, as this very one which quotes the testimony of the Cretan prophet, that his countrymen were "liars, evil beasts, slow bellies," and makes that a reason why Titus should rebuke sharply, not the unbaptized, but the baptized.

The reason for which Titus is left in Crete are not exactly those which are assigned for leaving Timothy in Ephesus. In the first place Titus is directed to "set in order the things that

are wanting, and establish presbyters in each city." No such command as this was given to Timothy. The difference would seem to arise from the fact that an island of such a size as Crete required only one central overseer, and a number of distinct rulers of cities, looking up to him. Here, then, is a further step in the organization of the Church, though we have still nothing which gives the presbyter the character which he possessed in later times. The next difference is that the Cretan teachers who required to be kept in order, though of the circumcision, and giving heed to Jewish fables and commands of men, seem to have had much less of the properly Gnostical character than those we have been lately hearing of. Questionings, and genealogies, and legal strifes are indeed noticed. But the context would lead one to suppose that the Judaizers were rather drenching the Church with idle legends, and Rabbinical debates about trifles, which people in all ages have called religious, because they refer to places or persons mentioned in the Bible, than with any of the high-flown speculations which amused and perverted a more educated people. It is to these he refers when he says, "All things are pure to the pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but their mind and their conscience are defiled." It was possible to find a good meaning and use in these fables, as well as in the rules which the Jewish teachers had laid down. It is not impossible that Titus may have discovered this profit in them himself, and therefore many have doubted whether he ought to discourage them. But the Apostle, whose mind is wholly manly and practical, has been taught to see the mischief which this trifling, even when it was in itself merely harmless and childish, was doing to a people who wanted moral life and restoration, who wanted a power to make them right, true, orderly citizens and men.

I have spoken of the Apostle's mind being itself practical and moral, and of his object being to produce a moral society in Crete. Any one who reads the Epistle with honest eyes must see that this is the case, that the object of his wholesome doctrine is to make old men sober, grave, reasonable; old

women not false accusers, not wine-bibbers; young women lovers of their husbands and lovers of their children; young men sober-minded; servants obedient, masters just; the overseer himself an example to the rest for uncorruptness, dignity, healthiness of speech, for hospitality, love of goodness, justice, holiness, moderation. But all these great moral effects, this righteous polity, this fulfilment of specific duties, had no other origin than in the saving "grace of God which had appeared to all men, teaching us that having denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live temperately, and righteously, and piously in this present age, expecting the blessed hope and manifestation of the glory of our great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and cleanse for Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." Thus the good news that God had manifested His own love and glory in Christ, who had given Himself for men, to deliver them, not from punishment, but from sin, and that He would finally manifest his righteousness and glory as the great reward, was the power, and the only power, by which St. Paul hoped to effect any thing, for Crete or for the world.

And he has the same hope for Cretans as for himself. He has not called them hard names without being willing to apply much harder, to Paul. Though bred at the feet of Gamaliel, though striving to practice all the righteousness of the law, he was conscious in himself of an ignorance, disobedience, malice and envy, which put him at least on their level. "But when the goodness and the philanthropy of our Saviour God had been manifested, not springing out of the works in righteousness which we had done, but according to His own mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, which He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to hope of eternal life." This doctrine the Apostle affirmed to be trustworthy. He would have his son Titus very confident about these things, that those who had believed God might be careful to be forward in good works. These

things he opposes as good and useful, to the foolish questions and debates which he wished to put down. An heretical man who would persist in raising such disputations, was to be rejected after one or two rebukes. The act of the overseer, St. Paul says, would only be the ratification of a sentence which his conscience had already pronounced upon himself.

THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

I SEIZE the opportunity which is afforded me by this beautiful little Epistle (the preservation of which in the canon, when so many that must have looked so much more plausible and important to the Church were rejected, is to me a wonderful proof of the divine care that was exercised over its judgment), to make two or three observations, which I believe show how the doctrine of the New Testament has borne upon the history of later ages. "Christianity," said Mr. Canning, in one of the debates upon the emancipation of the West Indian slaves, "grew up amidst the scenes of tyranny which are described in the sixth Satire of Juvenal. It recognized the institution of slavery. How can it be said to be essentially adverse to that institution?" This question ought to be fairly met. What is the answer? The Epistle to Philemon, I think, supplies it. St. Paul, in his letters to the Churches, had not proclaimed that slaves were free from their masters, had not insisted on masters dismissing their slaves; he had simply said that they were brothers. Here he explains that position. He calls upon a master to receive back a runaway slave, as both a servant and a brother. He might, he says command him to do this as an Apostle; but he begs it for the love of Christ, and for the love which Philemon bears to him, the bondsman of Christ, because such entreaties are mightier than commands. Here is the method of the Apostle and of the

Church for destroying slavery. They strike at the root of it, by proclaiming that a man can never be a thing, a chattel. But they strike not merely at a particular arrangement which has introduced that accursed notion and canonized it, but at every other which interferes with the recognition of God's Fatherhood, and Christ's Brotherhood, and with the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ in men, to the end that their true manhood may be called forth in them.

And thus we see how the principle which we have traced through all the Epistles of St. Paul, "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles," is the law of this Epistle also. And we see, how every theory which limits this doctrine to the Church, and so prevents the Church from being the witness of it to the world, destroys its meaning and effect. If Christ is not in every man, Christians can, Christians will, treat all as chattels, or worse than chattels, who do not bear their name. Very soon they will feel they have a right to treat men as chattels, or worse than chattels, if they *do* bear their name. No faith will be kept with heretics. For what has a heretic to do with Christ? No faith will be kept with those we think ungodly, or who differ from us. For what have they to do with Christ? Thus we proceed, in our zeal for Christ, to destroy all the life and morality which He has brought into the world, and we are obliged to invent a new morality of our own to supply that we have lost. May God grant that the earnest and faithful study of St. Paul's Epistles, and the discovery in what perfect harmony they are with every part of the New Testament, may deliver us and our children from this unspeakable danger, and strengthen us in the true faith of God's elect!

CONCLUSION.

In my Lectures on the Epistle to the Hebrews I made no attempt to settle the question whether St. Paul is or is not the author of it. Now that we have considered all the other Epistles which are attributed to him, we might be better fitted to pursue that inquiry. But I still feel it, as I did when I was examining the disputed letter itself, so entirely secondary, so comparatively insignificant, that I am not willing to enter upon it, at the close of a volume which has been devoted to the immeasurably more important object of pointing out the essential agreement of the first three Gospels, of the Epistles of St. James and St. Peter, and of all the letters which we are wont to ascribe to St. Paul with each other, and with the principles that are unfolded in a book so unlike them all, in form and style, as that with which I commenced. I have wished to show that the simplest Evangelist is occupied in setting forth that Son of God and Son of Man who is the subject of the Epistle to the Hebrews; that the Evangelists, like the writer of the Epistle, look upon the acts of Jesus as the fulfilment of the Old Testament, not because they corresponded to certain express predictions in it, but because they manifested Him who was implied in all the Jewish institutions, Him whom the Prophets learnt from those institutions to regard as already the Mediator between God and man —the King, High Priest, Prophets, from whom all their kings, priests, prophets, derived their functions and their light; that the first three Evangelists looked upon the time in which they were living, just as the writer of the Epistle did, as the winding up of an age which was to be terminated by a signal judgment,

and that they expected, as he did, that this judgment would introduce another age, the revelation of that kingdom of heaven of which their Lord had been speaking in all His discourses; that the Apostles of the circumcision, as well as the Apostle Paul, dwell upon an apostasy which was likely to precede the end, and which would, in some remarkable way, affect the Church, the Jewish nation, and the heathen world.

But if these facts prove the unity of all these writers in the New Testament, a unity arising out of their common testimony to the Son of God and to His kingdom, we have been equally obliged to acknowledge their diversity, that each Evangelist contemplated his Lord under a peculiar aspect, that St. James and St. Peter, though they are commonly classed together, had each his own character and function, that St. Paul was markedly different from both of them. It has been a great point too with us to ascertain what was his characteristical principle and work, how it is that he has seemed to be at variance with the original twelve, what it is that connects his letters together, though they are addressed to churches and persons so exceedingly dissimilar, and though each letter is manifestly adapted to those for whom it is written. I have not been at all unwilling to seek help from the name which has been given to him in all ages of the Church. He is emphatically, he declares himself to be, the teacher of the Gentiles. But that name itself requires explanation. If we take it to signify that he undervalued his Jewish calling, that he did not profit by his education at the feet of Gamaliel, that he did not invite Jews into the fold and call them to acknowledge the Son of David before he turned to Greeks or Romans, his acts, as much as his writings, will confute us. In like manner I am most thankful for the hint which is supplied by our Protestant tradition, that he, above all men, is the teacher of Justification by Faith. The unspeakable worth of that doctrine has come out to us, more and more clearly, as we have studied the Epistle to the Romans and that to the Galatians. But if we put any notion or dogma about Justification, before the revelation of Jesus Christ who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and

declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection of the dead, we found that the meaning of the Epistle to the Romans escaped us, and that the Gospel which he preached became a dead letter, not a power of God unto salvation. And if for the sake of bringing forth the Protestant or Lutheran principle into greater prominence, we overlooked these words in the Epistle to the Galatians, "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles," the intention and coherency of that Epistle perished; and so far from having vindicated Luther, we emptied his teaching of all its life. Whereas if we took that passage as the interpreter of St. Paul's mind and purpose, we were able to understand that he was the Apostle of the Gentiles, inasmuch as he was the Apostle of *Humanity*, that he was the preacher of Justification, inasmuch as he testified that Christ the Son of God and the Son of David had justified *Man* by rising from the dead, that the baptized Church was the witness of this Justification, that each man by believing in Him who had risen from the dead, became himself a justified and righteous man. And so the mystery which he speaks of in the Epistle to the Ephesians as hidden from ages and generations in Christ, but now as made manifest, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs and of the same body; the mystery of Jesus Christ and Him crucified, as the wisdom and power of God, as the living bond of human fellowship, which he announces to the Corinthians; the mystery of Christ's resurrection being the object of all his strivings, as he told the Philippians it was; the mystery of Christ being in us, the hope of glory which he unfolded to the Colossians; the mystery of the unveiling of Christ as the judgment and deliverance of the world, which he set before the Thessalonians; the mystry of Christ the Mediator between God and man, the ransom for all to be declared in due time, which was to be the subject of his son Timothy's preaching, the ground of his office, the hope of his daily life; the mystery of that kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man, by which Titus was to deliver the Cretans from their moral debasement; the mystery of Christ the Brother of man, which broke the chains of Onesi-

mus,—belong alike to the same Pauline message, betoken not merely the same divine and universal Teacher, but the same human agent.

If, therefore, those who deny St. Paul to be the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, merely rest that denial upon some peculiarities of style which they think cannot belong to the Jew of Tarsus, or upon the weight which is due to the authority of the Alexandrian fathers, and of the fathers in the West who agreed with them, or upon any points of external evidence whatsoever, I shall not argue the matter with them; partly because I am almost indifferent about the decision of the point; partly because I know how much we may be affected in the examination of such arguments by our previous habits of mind; partly because I esteem their learning much more highly than my own. But if they put forth *this* argument, that Paul being the Apostle of the Gentiles, was not likely to address a letter to the Hebrews, or that if he did, he was almost sure to dwell very particularly upon the calling of the Gentiles and their privileges in the Church, I put in my demurrer; I say that it is most important for the understanding of St. Paul's mind, to remember that he looked upon his vocation to be a preacher among the Gentiles as the carrying out of the promise made to Abraham—that he adapted himself to the condition and circumstances of every people to whom he wrote—that his doctrine respecting Christ as *the* Man who fulfils the promise made to man, that he should have dominion over all creatures, and should be made a little lower than the angels that he might be crowned with glory and honor—is the characteristic doctrine of all his Epistles. Or if it is contended, that the Apostle Paul must have written formally about justification by faith, and would not have talked as he does in this Epistle, of kings, and priests, and sabbath-days, and the temple and the sacrifice, I protest against this objection as based upon a theory which contracts and misrepresents the purpose of all St. Paul's writings, and makes them ineffective for the defence of that vital truth, within the formal limits of which it seeks to confine them.

This is all that I am disposed to say, on the mere question of authorship. But I cannot conclude without some allusion to those distinctive characters of this Epistle which are supposed, and rightly supposed, not to be equally prominent in any other. Although the idea of Sacrifice has been present in every letter, in every line—which we have read of St. Paul, it is quite evident that nowhere is the idea developed, as it is in this Epistle. Though I have shown, in my Lectures, that it does not stand alone, but is connected with all the institutions of the Jewish nation, the ordinary feeling that it occupies the central place among these institutions, and therefore the central place in the book which expounds them, is justified the more we reflect upon it. Though I have been careful to show that the Son of God and the Son of Man who is brought before us in the first and second chapters of the Epistle, is the subject of it, as he is of every other part of the New Testament, and that a doctrine of Sacrifice must not be substituted for Him here, more than a doctrine of Justification in the Epistle to the Romans, it is yet most obvious that this Person especially is brought before us here in His twofold character of Priest and Sacrifice, that His other characters, though not merged in these, are yet in some sense subordinate to them. Far from wishing to overlook these facts, I would earnestly call the reader's attention to them. Whether the Epistle to the Hebrews is St. Paul's or not, it is necessary, I think, to complete the circle of thoughts into which St. Paul introduces us. It is necessary, as showing us the deep common ground of those societies, each of which had a distinct purpose and function in God's kingdom. It is necessary that we may understand how each nation, and the particular Church which represented its character, was connected with that one Nation, the foundations of which had been laid in God's eternal and righteous Will, and in the surrender and sacrifice of man's will to it. It is needful to show us, how impossible it was that the intention of that nation's calling could be fulfilled, or that it could be reconciled with other nations, till there was some One who, being an heir of David, could say in stooping to the death

which was common to the Gentile and the Jew, "Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God;" one who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, that we, being purged from dead works, might serve the living God. It was needful, that we might know how a spiritual and universal polity might be raised out of the ruins of a legal and national polity, and might in due time make each nation capable of institutions more truly divine, of a life more orderly and free, than had ever belonged to the Hebrew. It is needful, I think, that we may be able to connect the varied aspects of humanity which we find in St. Paul, with the profound and simple theology of the Apostle John, and with his vision of the New Jerusalem descending from heaven, as a bride adorned for her husband.

THE

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS,

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF

THREE LECTURES

DELIVERED IN THE CHAPEL OF THE HONORABLE SOCIETY OF LINCOLN'S INN

ON THE

FOUNDATION OF BISHOP WARBURTON.

LECTURE I.

HOW THE NEW TESTAMENT FULFILS THE OLD.

HEBREWS I. 1—4.

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by a Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

Christian apologists have perhaps been inclined to overrate the effect of the argument for the divine origin of their faith which is deduced from its small beginnings and its wide diffusion. No doubt the facts upon which this argument is founded must make a great impression upon any one to whom they are presented for the first time. A thoughtful man listens to the words: "*Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren,*

Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him." He remembers that he is hearing this narration in the capital perhaps of some country in the West, inhabited by a people altogether unlike in manners, government, knowledge, to that which dwelt beside the sea of Galilee; a people nevertheless which has for centuries reverenced the names of Andrew and Peter, and received these records of their lives as oracles. Or as he hears the Gospel for Advent Sunday, he may reflect how One who entered upon an ass into the chief city of a section of a province of the Roman empire, amidst the shouts of a few of its poorest inhabitants,—to be cast out presently after as an ignominious and blasphemous pretender by its rulers and great men,—to be mocked and put to death by their heathen masters, has been acknowledged as King of the World by the most enlightened part of the empire which Tiberius ruled, and by nations unknown to him. Thoughts of this kind *may* lead to the questions: Whence came this wonder? To what power should it be attributed? But quite as often, when the sensation of surprise has worn off, they suggest a very different kind of speculations. The contrast between the actual state of Christendom and the character of the Book to which it appeals as the charter of its foundation, seems so great as to destroy all practical connection between them. "These Jewish records," it is asked, "and this European world of ours, what have they really in common? Something may have been bequeathed by them to us,—but what can they tell us of the changes which have taken place even in that belief which we have received from them? How can they give us any information respecting the effects which mixture with the habits and feelings of different races, the progress of society, new discoveries, and greater degeneracy, may have wrought in it? How, for instance, can they explain the secret, that Christendom should be divided about the meaning of its own existence,—that one portion of the European nations should confine the name to themselves—that the others should de-

nounce these as having departed from the principle upon which the name rests?" Such questions were often put in Bishop Warburton's days. He foresaw that they would not cease to be put in ours. He believed that they could be answered. He desired that his Lecturers should resolutely face the whole difficulty; that they should assert the truth of the Christian Religion on the very ground of the correspondence between the Prophecies of the Old and New Testament and the history of the Christian Church; that they should not shrink from what might seem the most embarrassing part of the problem, but should especially devote their attention to the subject of the Romish Apostasy.

These injunctions may perhaps be literally complied with if we consider prophecy as contained in certain words, and look for the fulfilment of it in certain isolated events. But the Bishop seems certainly to have intended that we should examine the character and context of later history; and I question whether we can enter much into the meaning of the Jewish Prophets unless we examine the character and context of their national history. It is not their main office to unfold the future: first of all they explain the present; they told their countrymen what was implied in their actual position, and how they had abused it; with what significance every thing about them was pregnant; how unmeaning their lives had become. We wrong them grievously when we deal with their words as if they were oracles uttered in some moment of wild inspiration; with their books as if they were a collection of Sibylline leaves. The power which they possess of announcing that which must be, seems to be involved in their divine gift of perceiving the eternal under the temporary—the substance through the shadow: for they are certain that the counsel of the Lord will stand; the unwillingness of men to recognize his purpose will not frustrate it; in acts of mercy and judgments he will unfold it more and more clearly to the Heart of the true Israelite; in due time it will be *fulfilled*.

This fulfilment then would seem to be the accomplishment of a purpose or idea which had been latent in earlier times; which

had been gradually making itself manifest to the divinely instructed Teachers; through them to as many as profited by their teaching. If this be the case, we cannot be wrong if we ask the Scriptures to tell us what this divine purpose is; by what process of education men in the old time were made conscious of it; what effects are promised from the full revelation of it. If we are willing to compare these expected results with the condition of the world since the time when the Scripture records leave us, we at least show that we do not shrink from the test which the founder of these Lectures wished us to use. And this mode of applying it may, I think, better than any other, meet the demands of a modern historical student. In general he does not care much for coincidences; those which are presented to him by Scriptural interpreters he is apt to regard either as merely fortuitous, or as produced by an ingenious distortion of words and facts. What he seeks for is some law, which may connect together the different facts he has observed in ecclesiastical or general history; he is willing to hear whether Scripture recognizes such a law; he will admit only this proof of its superiority to any which has occurred to himself in the course of his meditations, that it better explains the actual course of events, and more successfully clears away apparent anomalies.

Such a student, however, may feel a reasonable distrust of any one who professed to extract from the whole series of Biblical documents the purpose or idea of Jewish history, and to watch its rising from dawn to noonday. Nor, I think, can the distrust of a looker-on possibly equal that which every one who has undertaken the task, and experienced repeated discomfitures in it, must feel of himself. The first, therefore, may naturally ask, Can your New Testament be what it professes to be—a key to the meaning of the Old—if it contains no book especially devoted to the illustration of this subject?. The latter, being confident that God will not leave his creatures without the necessary helps for knowing that which it has pleased Him to reveal, will seek diligently to ascertain where he is to look for a guide

through this labyrinth. And I believe he will not be long in finding what he seeks.

There have been differences of opinion from the earliest times respecting the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews; even its right to a place in the canon of Scripture has been disputed. But it has never, I think, been doubted that the writer, whoever he was, whatever weight is due to his testimony, intended to set forth the relation between a dispensation which he believed was passing away and one which he believed was commencing. No external evidence is required to show that this was his object; it exhibits itself at every turn to the most careless reader. To an ordinary historical student of our day, it is a matter of indifference what the outward claims of the book are; he may look upon it merely as the production of a very early Christian Jew, thoroughly acquainted with the institutions of his country, loving them affectionately, yet convinced that a sentence of death was upon them, and that they would not perish without giving place to something better. Considered in this light, it must, I conceive, be very interesting; it *may* supply that key to the interpretation of the other parts of Scriptures which we desire. Those who are thoroughly convinced of its authority will, of course, examine it with quite another feeling. They will expect to find, and gladly recognize in it if they do find, a guiding light to their own inquiries respecting the dealings of God with man. What help may it afford to one performing the office which has been committed to me, all I think will acknowledge who know how directly it bears upon the leading points of controversy between Protestants and Romanists; how it forces us to consider those points, in their historical as well as their theological import; above all, how solemn and awful and practicable its character is, reminding us that we are occupied with realities which concern our own lives, and the life of every human being; and restraining, if any thing can restrain, the disposition to indulge in the hateful chicaneries and pettinesses of religious disputation.

I propose then, in my first three Lectures, to show that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews sets forth a principle which

he affirms was implied in the Old Testament, fulfilled in the New; that he traces its gradual working and development through the former; that he helps us to understand what changes would be wrought by the full manifestation of it.

If I am permitted to deliver the three Lectures of next year, I propose to show that under different aspects this principle is the central one in the other books of the New Testament; in the first three Gospels, in the Epistles of St. James, St. Peter, and St. Paul, and in the different writings of St. John.

In the third year, I shall hope to apply this principle to the history of Christendom, in the period of its growth out of the Roman Empire,—in the period of its direct conflict with Mahommedanism, and in what is commonly called the Modern Period, dating from the commencement of the fourteenth century.

This inquiry will have brought us into direct contact with the Romish system. But, in order to complete the course, and carry out the intentions of the Founder, it will be expedient, in the last three Lectures, to consider that System formally, in reference to the Scriptural principle we have been elucidating, to the working of that principle in the Church, and to the future destinies of the world.

The plan which I have laid down relieves me from the necessity of introducing my inquiry into the scope of the Epistle, by a discussion respecting its author. Those learned men who reject the ordinary tradition, have done so because they think the purpose of the writer, though it may harmonize with that which they discover in St. Paul's writings, is yet not identical with it; diversities of style and the opinions of several early Churches, especially in the West, come in to corroborate the conclusion which they have formed upon this ground. On the other hand, the most obvious external differences have not prevented earnest students from continuing to think of it as the work of the Apostle to the Gentiles, because there has been a persuasion consciously or unconsciously in their minds, that the object of his life would be less intelligible if this letter were not regarded as one expression of it.

On every account, therefore, we should postpone this inquiry till we have ascertained what the main characteristic of the Epistle is, and are able to compare it with other parts of the New Testament. Nor am I at all afraid that the credit of the letter should suffer while this point remains undecided, or even whatever the decision upon it may be. Those who have convinced themselves by experiment that it binds the different books of Scripture to each other and to the history of mankind, will believe that it is entitled to a place among those books, let the writer of it be who he may (for the tone of the Epistle, its most obvious, as well as its most minute peculiarities, determine it to the apostolical age); those who do not care for its contents will scarcely devote any practical attention to it, though they supposed that the whole college of apostles had been engaged in the composition of it.

The questions—to whom was this letter addressed, and what was the occasion that suggested it—cannot be thus passed over, for they bring some of its most striking peculiarities immediately under our notice. Among these, every one must have observed the exceedingly earnest tone of the practical exhortations. In a book possessing more of a systematical and logical character than any of the writings of the New Testament, it might have been supposed that these would be thrown into the background, that they would not be allowed to interrupt the course of the argument. But they recur at every turn, they enter into the very substance of the letter, every thing else seems subordinate to them. In their character they are different from those we find elsewhere. They are not simply warnings against certain evil tendencies or false opinions, such as we meet with in the Epistles to the Corinthians and Galatians; they express very distinctly the writer's fear that those whom he is addressing are likely to become apostates from the faith of Christ.

Persons who have formed exaggerated notions of the purity of the apostolical churches—notions certainly not derived from the only authentic record which we possess respecting them—may well be startled when they read such warnings as these. But

surely the surprise is much heightened when we consider *what* body it was which was thus addressed. Other indications in the Epistle leave us in no doubt. Its title—if we could depend certainly upon its authority—might lead us to think of those Jews dispersed over the different provinces of the Roman empire, who had believed Jesus to be the Christ, those whom St. Peter addresses in his Epistle. But if these Jews were not absent from the mind of the writer (and it is difficult to suppose any part of his nation absent from his mind), they were not the persons to whom a letter especially concerning the worship of the temple, the priesthood, and the holy city, would most apply. Such objects might be present to the imagination of the distant Jew; they were constantly present to the eyes of those who dwelt in Palestine. We must then believe they were the members of the mother-church of the world, the successors or survivors of those who were baptized when the Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost, of whom the fear was entertained by one who knew them and loved them well, that their faith was becoming daily weaker, and that they were in danger of losing it altogether.

And yet it is remarkable that these Hebrew Christians are not charged with open and conscious departure from any truth which had been delivered to them by their early teachers, with any apparent abandonment of the duties belonging to their own peculiar position. The one complaint of them is, that they had been content with their first imperfect apprehensions, that they had not labored after a fuller and deeper knowledge; that they were still eating the food of children, when, by reason of their years, they ought to be capable of that which nourishes men. This, the writer of the letter intimates, was their characteristic vice. It may seem to be any thing but of a deadly kind; their friendly teacher is most willing to believe that it is not; still he could trace too many indications of the decay of Christian belief and energy, which had been the effect of it, to doubt that if it were suffered to grow, all the culture they had received from apostles and martyrs would be utterly in vain.

The grounds of this fear it must be well worth while to ascer-

tain for our own profit, as well as for the illustration of the Epistle.

1. We should always recollect that the Jews who believed Jesus to be the Christ, looked upon themselves as the real Jews; their countrymen they charged with rejecting the true heir of David, Him who had come to fulfil the covenant made to their fathers. When, therefore, the apostles, after the day of Pentecost, went up into the temple at the hour of prayer, this was no concession to the prejudices of others, no conformity to an inveterate habit. They felt that none could have more share in the worship of that Temple than they had. While the Priests and Levites permitted sheep and oxen to be sold in it, their Master had driven them all out, because He would not have his Father's house turned into a house of merchandise. He had warned them indeed that the time would come when not one stone of this building should remain upon another; and every thing which had taken place since the prediction was given, made them sure that some awful judgment must be overhanging their nation. But they were not to anticipate this judgment: while the Temple stood, it was God's temple; while the sacrifices were offered, they were the sacrifices which he had appointed. St. Stephen, undoubtedly, may have uttered words which offered an excuse for the charge, that he had said the Temple and the customs which Moses had delivered would be abolished; but we cannot in the least gather from his defence that he thought the present use of either was to be abandoned: rather, we perceive his deep reverence for them, as the shrines of a presence which their fathers and they, because they were uncircumcised in heart, had been despising. No change was produced in this feeling by St. Peter's visit to Cornelius; the opposition to it showed how thoroughly Jewish the disciples were; nor, when they yielded to the Divine demonstration, did they recognize in it any thing else than a fulfilment of the promise, that the Seed of David should reign over the Gentiles.

The mixture of Greek proselytes with the regular Hebrews in the Church of Antioch, and the common name of Christians

which was given to them, doubtless by the heathen inhabitants, no further affected the Jerusalem Christians than as they were led, perhaps, more zealously to avail themselves of the privileges of their own position. This effect was certainly produced by the report which reached them that St. Paul had founded societies composed even more of Gentiles than of Jews ; that he had ordained elders and deacons over them, had addressed each of them as an *Ecclesia*, a body called out or elected, language which seemed strangely to interfere with the idea of the children of Abraham as *the* elect separated family. Yet St. Paul had in every city gone first into the synagogue ; the ground of his churches was Jewish ; he, as much as any apostle, had spoken of the promises made to the fathers ; he too went up to the feasts and purified himself in the temple. From the conversation which is recorded in the twenty-first chapter of the Acts, it is evident that St. James, who was the presiding apostle over the Jerusalem church, not only obeyed strictly the injunctions of the Mosaic law, but practised those portions of the ritual which were merely permissive and voluntary. The testimonies respecting him, from the Jewish historian and the oldest Christian annalist, abundantly confirm this conclusion. They agree in representing him as one for whom the Jewish people at large had the deepest reverence. He was felt to be the righteous man of the city by all the parties which existed in it. His practical holiness was assuredly the strongest witness which could have been borne against the formalism of the Pharisee, and the heathenism of the Sadducee—against the infinite religious divisions and deep moral debasement of his nation. It was a witness that the disciples of Jesus were not, as their adversaries called them, a Nazarene sect, seeking to bind themselves by a new name. It was a witness for the sacredness of the old dispensation ; the absence of which would have turned the Gospel into a mere speculation, and would have made the other preachers of it unintelligible to those who most professed to admire them.

Yet it is not difficult to understand how persons calling themselves the disciples of St. James, and fancying themselves such,

because they were vehement partisans of what they supposed to be his doctrine, might pervert, nay, invert, his example. What in him was a thankful determination to use all the blessings which had been given him as a Jew, that he might enter into closer communion with the Lord of the whole earth, would become in them a determination not to associate with uncircumcised people. What was in him sanctification from the habits of a divided and exclusive world, would be in them exclusiveness and division in another form and under another pretext. What in him was the acknowledgment of his Master as the Divine Fulfiller of the Covenant to Abraham and David, would be in them a notion of Him as merely the servant of that Covenant. And yet this mighty difference may have been quite imperceptible to these Jewish Christians. The phrases which denoted their state of mind might be those which they had borrowed from St. James; their feelings of reverence for holy places, and of affection for their Jewish calling, might seem to be the very transcript of his. But the contrast would appear in the whole tone of their lives; above all, it would reveal itself after his death to those who expected, as he did, the destruction of the City and Temple—who felt that the loss of such an intercessor, and the crime which had occasioned it, must hasten the coming judgment. These persons will have seen that while he by his words and life was preparing himself, and, so far as he was able, his flock, for this judgment, it would overtake his pretended admirers as a thief in the night. Those Jewish institutions which they had been connecting with all their devotions, all their hopes,—for the sake of which they had forsaken the assembling of themselves together as members of a Christian community, would pass away with a great noise. Where would they be found after such an earthquake? What faith had they which could survive it?

2. But it would be doing these Christian Jews great injustice to suppose that they merely contemplated the preservation of the Jewish polity, with all the miserable accidents by which it was now surrounded. They knew how the priesthood had been degraded by the Herodian family, and how continually it had

been a mere tool of the Roman procurator ; they knew that the law had been depraved by Pharisaical traditions ; they knew that the whole of society was in a more thoroughly evil condition than it had been in the days of Jeremiah, before the great captivity. But had not Christ come to restore the tabernacle which was fallen down? Had he not declared the true sense and spirit of the law? Had he not, by the poverty of his life, borne witness for a more than patriarchal simplicity?

Thoughts exceedingly like these must often have been presented by St. James to his disciples. In them lay the deepest truth. It seemed as if they could scarcely be turned to an evil use. And yet how easy it was to dwell on the words—Reformer and Restorer—till the significance of these same words was utterly lost. If Christ were only what they intimated, He might have told certain great truths ; He might have hinted at great and desirable improvements in men's social condition: but He had accomplished nothing. He might be greater than all previous teachers : but the universe, and men, and their connection with God, were still a riddle. All the questions which men had been asking themselves for so many centuries—all that had been implied in the existence of laws and governments, of priesthoods and sacrifices, had not been practically explained by this great Prophet. There had been a vision of something bright and good in the world, which could not, doubtless, pass away, without leaving some shadows behind. But it had passed away, and that with which, in the minds of these Hebrew Christians, it was inseparably interwoven, would pass away also. If it were so, then the Covenant with Abraham, and all the institutions of which they spoke so much, seemed to have been but pompous inanities ; they had promised much, and performed almost nothing.

Would not these reflections force themselves more and more upon the minds of those who used this language? Would not they receive an awful interpretation, a seeming confirmation, from the day which was at hand. Must they not look forward to that day, not as a day of redemption, but as one of discomfiture and dismay? When it actually came, would they not be found

to have lost, not only their Christian, but even their Jewish position?

3. The habit of mind I spoke of last, led the Hebrew Christians to dwell upon our Lord's poverty and humiliation, because these were the great contrasts to the pride and pomp from which they supposed He came to purify their countrymen. But it was impossible, while they called themselves St. James's disciples, always to rest in these thoughts. They knew that their teacher had spoken of Him, not only as poor, not only as entering into every human sorrow, but also as divine. Both truths had been distinctly asserted by him. They knew that he did not feel them to be irreconcilable. But how were they to be reconciled? The Jewish Scriptures spoke of *angels*. Might not these be intermediate beings, floating between earth and heaven, far below Him who filled all in all, far above His creatures in this world? Might they not be permitted, for certain great ends and at certain times, to put on actual or apparent human flesh, and to dwell among men? Might not our Lord be one of them: perhaps the chief of them all? Speculations of this kind, closely connecting themselves with the idea of the Messiah, occupied the minds of the deeply-thinking Alexandrian Jews, and presented themselves in more vulgar and practical forms to the despised Samaritan. Shortly after the fall of Jerusalem they were found working mightily in the minds of those who had believed in Jesus; and, blending themselves with those views, apparently so simple, which represented Him as the Great Reformer, as the poor man.* I have endeavored to show in the next lecture how little the Angels actually spoken of in the Old Testament belong to this region. They must therefore have already taken hold of the Church in Judæa. But whither would they lead?

That middle region between heaven and earth is the home of all the demons of Greek Mythology, yea, of all the objects of

* I have adopted the meaning of the word *Ebionite*, which I think is now generally sanctioned. The nature of the connection between the Ebionite and Gnostical opinions I hope to examine more fully in some illustrations which I propose to append to these Lectures when they are complete.

human worship which in later or earlier times have shadowed forth the deepest wants of man's spirit, his sense of his own evil, his sense of the blessings and curses of the outward universe. The forms of idolatry, therefore, which the Jewish law had denounced,—which the Jews had believed that the GOD of Abraham would destroy, were likely at once to invade the heart and conscience which entered into this strange circle. And though these forms had at this time lost their definiteness and much of their beauty, they had not lost their potency. It was a time when men were beginning to talk largely about emanations from the Divinity—when old idolatries were evaporating into impersonations of spiritual qualities or natural powers—when shapeless monsters of Superstition were produced from a union of Atheism with the terrors of an evil conscience, fearing where no fear was. Even in Rome, though the religion had become a mere state machinery, —though the wonder which Cicero expressed, that two augurs could meet each other with grave faces, was daily becoming more reasonable,—though the emperor was the one really acknowledged god of the world—dreams and portents, and Babylonian numbers, never exerted a greater influence over the mind of the tyrant and the slave, the soldier in the camp, and the matron in her closet. Where then could a Christian Jew, who once began to look upon the invisible world as a region for his fancy to work in, be expected to stop short? His Lord would soon be regarded as one of a multitude of godlike personages or symbols, or emanations; his direct Christian faith would disappear altogether. But it would carry along with it his Jewish reverence for the one Lord, the Jehovah. Nay, the very Paganism which was left as a deposit, would be something infinitely less real than the Paganism of former times,—a collection of shadows, with scarcely the hint of a subject,—of images, with scarcely the dream of an archetype.

There was ground enough then for the apprehension which at first seemed so strange, that the Christians of Palestine might become, in the strictest and largest sense of the word, Apostate. And yet any one rudely attacking those notions and habits of mind which were rapidly leading to this point, must have attacked

precious truths,—must have undermined the reverence which these Christians entertained for the Apostles and Martyrs, from whom they had received them. Unless every one of these convictions could be shown to have a real ground,—unless their belief in the sacredness of the law and covenant of the Father could be deepened,—unless they could be made to see that Christ had indeed come to fulfil, and had actually fulfilled, this law and covenant, and stamped them with precisely that kind of permanence which the Scriptures had said was belonging to them,—above all, unless their dim notions of something Divine and something Human in the Person of their Lord, could be taken out of the cloud-land of fancy, and be proved to have an eternal basis, adequate to sustain both the past and the future,—they could not be prepared for the calamities which were threatening them, or be saved from an utter shipwreck of faith. To these points, therefore, the writer of the Epistle addresses himself in the words I have taken for my text, which are, I believe, a key to the whole Epistle.

"*God*," he says, "*who in sundry times and divers manners spake in times past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by a Son, whom He hath made heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds. Who being the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.*"

The antithetical character of this paragraph has been often noticed, and is very obvious. But it has been strangely supposed that this form was adopted as a rhetorical artifice, such a one as would be familiar to a Hellenized Jew, bred in the schools of Alexandria. Surely it is not necessary to refute such an hypothesis, by proving or assuming the Divine authority of the Book. If a writer who believed that the last and saddest crisis of his country's history was at hand, and who had awful apprehensions of the moral state of the persons whom he was addressing, could

deliberately set down for the purpose of balancing sentences, and making words jingle,—we must at once dismiss him, as destitute of all truthfulness and all human feeling, as incapable of conveying instruction to his own age or to any other. The rudest utterance which could convey his meaning was the one which a good man, writing at such a time and under such impulses, would have chosen. But if any truth, or portion of the truth, he had to deliver, was brought out with greater clearness in this antithetical form, he was bound to use it—for him it was the most simple and natural. The charge of artifice lies against us who invent what we call rules of composition, or canons of taste; calling this style easy and genuine, that recondite or elaborate, without bringing either to the only test by which the worth of any style can be tried,—its fitness to embody the thoughts which are entrusted to it. The more we study this passage, the more, I think, we shall feel that if the writer had refused to be antithetical, he must have sacrificed, not some accidents, but the very essence of his meaning; must have utterly failed to make his design in the letter intelligible.*

The paragraph opens with two words, which our translators have rendered "In sundry times and divers manners." † The last phrase is open to no objection. The first is generally allowed to be unsatisfactory. The words of St. Paul, "We know *in part*, and we prophesy *in part*," ‡ exactly explain the original expression. In it, no doubt, is included the idea of an adaptation in the teaching of the prophets to the *times* in which they appeared. A plague of locusts might require one kind of revelation, an Assyrian invasion another, actually approaching cap-

* The second Homily of Chrysostom on the Epistle to the Hebrews, is particularly worthy of study, as illustrating the practical value of the balancing clauses and opposed words in this paragraph. Each word in the clause Ὃς ὢν ἀπαύγασμα had, he shows, been the plea for some heresy; the full idea is expressed in the union of the apparent contradictions.

† πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως (many partedly and many manneredly).

‡ 1 Cor. xiii. 9. Ἐκ μέρους γὰρ γινώσκομεν, καὶ ἐκ μέρους προφητεύομεν (for of part we know, and of part we prophecy).

tivity, a still deeper one. But the leading thought seems to be, that there were many parts or divisions in the prophetical harmony; that no one utterance embraced the entire mystery, and that each portion had its own "manner"—that form of history or discourse, of song or vision, which was fittest for setting it forth.

To the Hebrews of the Christian age these prophecies presented themselves as a series of documents which could be read, translated, commented on. The power of contemplating them as parts of a whole was, no doubt, a valuable one; but it might easily be turned into a curse—the Scribes and Pharisees had actually made it one. For while they worshipped the letter of the prophecy, they forgot that it had proceeded from the lips of living, suffering men, and had gone to the hearts and consciences of actual men. It is not idly then, or without a meaning, that the writer reminds his readers very frequently throughout the Epistle that the words were "spoken:" if they were to be felt, they must be felt as spoken words, not merely as the words of a book. If they were so felt, the language, "God spake them," would be also acknowledged as real, and not mere formal language. The people who heard the prophet, whether they were awakened to repentance, or whether they turned away in rage from the reprover, confessed his voice to be a Divine voice. It discovered evils within them which no mortal eye could have seen. It brought out that which was working confusedly in their spirits into awful clearness; it brought past and present and future before them, as one for them and one in Him, who is, and was, and is to come. There was no questioning in their minds how this could be. If they believed a man to be a prophet at all, to be speaking true words to them, they believed God was speaking in him. They had no doubt that He spoke to their fathers out of the midst of the fire; that voice had proclaimed the law which was laid up in the ark of the tabernacle. It could not be a different voice which was carrying home this law to their inner man; which was making them sure that it was as true for them as for their fathers; that they had broken it as their fathers had;

that they were within the scope of all its blessings; that its curses were about to be fulfilled in them. Nay, did not the voice of this human speaker seem, in one sense, to be even more divine than that which came forth amidst the thunders? It was less terrible to the outward ear; it seemed to convey more the assurance of a personal presence to the Heart. The whole education of the Jew was designed to withdraw him from outward and visible things. The material terrors which the people saw in the plagues and wilderness had passed away—if they were renewed, it was in pestilences and earthquakes, or in the hosts of Sennacherib. In these the voice of God might be heard, but the words of him who made that voice intelligible, who declared why it was uttered, what internal corruptions had provoked it, must seem to come from even a more secret and holy place.

But though their fathers, at each actual crisis of their history, might have confessed that God was speaking in the prophets, it must often have been a sore difficulty to them to reconcile this conviction with what they had been told—with what these prophets told them—of the Unseen and Eternal Jehovah. Why did holy men arise except to testify that no creature might measure itself with the Creator; how was it then that these creatures, these men of like passions with themselves, whom they saw going in and out among them, could dare to say that the word of God was in them? It was a mighty perplexity, the perplexity of the Jew's life: mingling itself with every thought of his nation, of himself, of the Divine Lord. His race was taught to consider itself elect and holy. Yet they were a stiff-necked people, a people of unclean lips, guilty of rebellions which no heathen could be charged with. Being in the covenant, he must look upon himself as righteous, and whenever he drew nigh to God, he knew that the belief was no delusion: yet he was conscious of infinite evil. He dared not think of God, except as the High and Holy One who inhabited eternity; he dared not doubt that men, nay, that he himself was intended to bear the image of this High and Holy One.

Strange contradictions these, which, if they had rushed at once

upon the mind of any man, must have crushed it. But they came, like the revelation of the prophet, in sundry portions and divers manners; and as each new difficulty arose, there came with it the sense of a solution, of one upon which it was possible to act even then, and which would be complete, all sufficient, one day.

That day, says the writer of the Epistle, has come; we are "at the end of those days" to which the prophets belonged. And now God hath spoken to us by a *Son*. If a proof were wanting how little the antitheses of this passage had been introduced for the purpose of oratorical effect, what essential and pregnant parts they are of the meaning, we should find it in an oversight of our translators respecting this clause: an oversight so slight and natural, that one could hardly have attributed any mischief to it, and yet which has, I believe, darkened the sense, not of a single sentence, but of the whole Epistle. By substituting the possessive pronoun for the indefinite article—*His* Son, for *A* Son—they have removed the emphasis from the right word; they have led readers to take the word "Son" as a chance synonyme of Christ or the Messiah. Were it only this, there would be no connection between the rest of the chapter and this introduction, nor would either have any direct application to the circumstances of the Hebrew Christians. The passages which the writer quotes from the Old Testament are not meant to prove that a Messiah was expected by the holy Israelites. Every Pharisee would have admitted that assertion. The Christians of Palestine did not require to be told that Jesus was the Messiah of whom the prophets spoke; every act of their lives involved that profession. The real question to debate with the first was, What kind of Messiah did your fathers look for? with the second, What manner of person is he whom you recognize under that name? The writer of the Epistle says: Only to a Son of God belong those words of the Old Testament, which denote, as you Pharisees believe, a Messiah; only to a Son of God belong those acts which you Christian Jews attribute to Jesus of Nazareth.

The illustration of these two assertions, and of the method by which he establishes and connects them, I reserve for another Lecture. But for our present purpose it is very needful to observe *how* he describes that Son in whom God was speaking; "*Whom he hath constituted heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.*" We often say that Revelation is progressive, and the writer of this Epistle abundantly justifies the language. But by *progress*, some seem to understand a continual journeying away from the inmost centre; a movement towards the circumference. Here we seem to be taught that each step of it is bringing us nearer to the ground of things—nearer to the throne of God. The revelation of God in this sense is truly the unveiling of himself. First, He speaks in that which is most distant from Him, the mere things which He has formed; then in men whom He created to rule over these things; lastly, in Him who by the eternal law is the inheritor of all things, in whom and for whom they were created. The order of the world, the succession of ages, spoke of the permanence of God. Here He speaks in Him by whom He framed the order of the world, the succession of times. At each step we are led into a higher, more awful region; yet not into a region more remote from humanity and human sympathies: rather, into one where humanity has reached its highest point; where every faculty and affection and energy has its full expansion and fruition. Things, in themselves cold and inanimate, are found to have a personal centre; the course of time, in itself dead and abstract, to have a living Mover. It is the Son of God, "*the brightness of his Father's glory, the express image of his substance.*" Glimpses of his glory we have seen in his creation, brighter glimpses in the love and tenderness of human creatures. Here is He from whom they have both proceeded; here is the mystery which the prophets perceived in different portions, and expressed in divers manners; here is the whole WORD, of which they uttered different syllables. Men are told that they are made in the image of God: how it could be they knew not. Here is his express image, not shown in the heaven above, nor in the earth beneath, but in a man. In Him

creation has subsisted, in spite of all the elements of confusion and discord within it. "*He has upholden it by the word of his power.*" In Him we find how humanity has been a holy thing, though each man felt himself to be unholy. For the moment He clothes himself with all its vilest accidents it becomes actually holy; the sinfulness which belongs to each man's separate nature is *purged* out of human nature when He inhabits it, and takes it unto Himself. In Him it is proved that man is meant to have his dwelling with God; for He having purified the soul and body which he had taken, "*sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high*," claiming for all men the privileges of spiritual beings, the power of rising above the limitations of space and time—of entering into fellowship with Him who filleth all in all. And since He, in His human nature, "*has been made so much higher than the angels, having, by inheritance, obtained a more excellent name than they;*" man must not look upon himself as subject to angels; must not think of them as occupying any intermediate space between himself and the Lord of all. He must confess that He is a spirit, even as they are; that he is brought into a direct relationship with Him before whom they veil their faces.

Such a doctrine was surely a very awful one. The Hebrew Christians must have felt it to be so. Their teacher desired nothing so much as that they should feel it. A feeble frivolous tone of mind, which was glad to lose itself among shadows, which would not confront realities, had grown up among them; they would have hid themselves among the forms and images of their ritual, as Adam hid himself among the trees of the garden. Under pretence of exalting their privileges as Jews, they were shrinking from the great privilege of all, that of knowing Him who had called them to be His people. The writer of the Epistle wishes to convince them that it was no longer possible thus to deny their spiritual rights. They must either acknowledge them and walk in them, or sink into a much thicker darkness, a deeper atheism than any which their fathers had ever known. Hence vehement objurgations and awful warnings mix so strange-

ly with language of transcendant encouragement and hope. The two were never separated in the writer's mind. A spiritual creature must have capacities of highest vision, of infinite love. He must be capable again of utter self-concentration and despair. A crisis was at hand which would bring all to the test. Not earth only, but also heaven would be shaken; not an ordinary civil polity, but the Divine polity, would seem to be subverted. If, in the outward forms of that polity, lay the only proof to them of a relationship between God and his creatures, their belief would vanish altogether. If, through the forms of that polity they had risen to the apprehension of a relationship with God, of which all human relations were lower forms, a relationship grounded upon the Divine nature itself; upon the union of a Son with a Father in one Eternal Spirit; they would know that there was something which could not be shaken, but must remain, and that something a resting-place for the hopes of their race and of the whole creation.

LECTURE II.

THE DIVINE EDUCATION OF THE JEWS.

HEBREWS II. 6—8.

But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is Man, that thou art mindful of him? or the Son of Man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.

THE first words of this Epistle contain, as I have said already, the key to the whole of it. "*God spake to our fathers;*" this is the announcement of the principle upon which the history and life of the Jew rested. All that was earnest or brave in his acts or words came from the conviction: "We are the Lord's servants; He has actually made himself known to us; He has actually chosen us to be his people. He is actually reigning over us." Every thing that was cowardly, sensual, idolatrous, in him arose from a want—secret or acknowledged—of this conviction; from forgetfulness of the Covenant; from the feeling, "After all, the law did not come forth from any unseen Being; the human prophet did not utter the Word of the Lord." Resort to what explanation of the Old Testament scriptures we will; imagine as many interpolations in them as we please, we cannot construct them upon any basis but this. The moment we attempt it, the records become a collection of incoherent fragments. It does not require learning and ingenuity to prove that they do not

form a whole; they cannot form one; that which gave them their unity and their relation to each other, is gone. The Jews were not a nation unless the Divine Covenant was a reality, and not a fiction; they have no history if the books which pretend to contain it are a record of certain limited speculations about God, not of that which He spoke to man.

God hath spoken to us by a Son. This is the announcement of the fact which the New Testament unfolds. Put any other fact in the place of this: say that the books of the New Testament are setting forth an idea, and not a fact; say that they are occupied about a great many subjects, and not with this one,—with others only as they bear upon this one—and it requires no great learning and argument to prove them a collection of incoherent fragments; they can be nothing else: you have taken away the bond which holds them together; of necessity they fall to pieces. Try to re-construct them upon some other ground, and you will soon discover what a hopeless, unintelligible mass of materials you have to deal with—materials which, by no possible processes of elimination or re-formation, you can bring into any reasonable order.

But the object of the writer of this Epistle is not only to set forth that which is assumed in the idea of a revelation, and that which was characteristic of the later revelation; he wishes to show that the later was implied in the earlier; that the prophetical speech was a riddle until it was explained by the speech in a Son; that only those who acknowledged such a speech as the one adequate Divine utterance, could understand their own oracles. That he may establish this point, he refers to a variety of passages from the Old Testament. To understand the use he makes of these passages is the only real difficulty in the interpretation of the Epistle: he who evades it must cast the whole aside as unintelligible; he who overcomes it will find, I think, clearness and brightness where he had found most obscurity.

There are some quotations in the first chapter of the Epistle —very important for the elucidation of the subject, and for the removal of a practical error—about which there is no perplexity.

They refer to angels. These, the writer says, are always spoken of in the Jewish scriptures as mere servants, ministering spirits. No divinity is assigned to them; they are sent forth upon errands of mercy; they are represented as doing works for man, not as claiming to be his masters or to mediate between him and his Creator. That idea of mediation may indeed be traced through the Old Testament: not, however, in its allusions to angels, but in its language respecting one of whom it is written: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

Here the difficulty, of which I spoke, begins; one which has greatly exercised simple readers of the book, and theological students still more. The passages which follow seem to be connected with certain events which were occurring at the times in which they were written, events in which the individual speaker, or the nation generally, was deeply interested. Are we to suppose they did not refer to those events? Or had they a double sense, like a heathen oracle? Or was a later writer permitted to put such a sense upon them, it not being originally in them? Every commentator has felt that he must meet these questions. The actual answers have been chiefly three.

Some assume that a New Testament writer could in virtue of his commission and inspiration, pronounce such and such a meaning to be the true one; we are bound to receive his interpretation, however much it may differ from the one we should naturally have given.

Another class of interpreters say: No doubt we ought to accept the dictum of an inspired writer. But ought we from one so gifted, merely to expect a certain exposition of a few specific passages; should not we rather receive him as a guide to the right principles of interpretation. May we not suppose that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews is putting his sanction upon the use of allegory; is stamping it as the true divine method of construing the Old Scriptures, and so is tacitly, and by anticipation, confirming the application of it by later doctors?

"Would it not be more correct to say, cry the teachers of an opposite and bolder school, that the writer of the Epistle had

learned the allegorical system of the Alexandrian Jews; that partly because it accorded with his own feeling, partly as an *argumentum ad hominem* for those whom he was addressing, he adopted it readily; that by doing so he promoted the formation of a very perverse and perplexing system in the Church; that in spite of his authority, we must return to a fair and legitimate consideration of the original text—from which his translations sometimes depart widely — and must give it the most literal meaning we can."

Perfectly agreeing with the first school, that the interpretations in this Epistle are those which we may adopt most safely in reading the Old Testament, I am equally disposed to think with the second, that it is not like a Divine instructor, not even like a great human instructor, merely to give us specimens of a method of unravelling that which is important and sacred, without initiating us, in some degree, into the method itself; and I am thoroughly at one with the last, in the conviction that reverence for Scripture should bind us to seek for an exact meaning of the passages quoted; which meaning can only be ascertained by considering the occasions which called them forth, and their historical contexts. But as I am at issue with the first in their opinion, that it is safe at any time to contemplate Scripture merely as a set of words; so am I with the other two in the belief which is common to them, that the writer of this Epistle has ever resorted to allegories, or has, in a single instance, overlooked the circumstances under which the words which he adopts were uttered, and the meaning they must have suggested to him who first heard or spoke them.

There is a certain ambiguity in our use of the adjective "literal." We sometimes take it as a synonyme for "exact;" sometimes as the opposite of "spiritual" or "internal." In the latter sense we describe by it that kind of result which is obtained by *merely* looking at words and syllables—a result of which we may pronounce at once that it is almost worthless; for no man who merely spells out a sentence, without considering who spoke it, to whom it was spoken, when and where it was spoken,

will find what it means, scarcely that it means any thing. The most exact interpreter is one who takes most heed of every thing which illustrates the book or sentence he is considering; which raises it from a dead utterance to a living one. Exactness of this kind I hope to show presently may be predicated of all the references in this Epistle; the absence of every thing allegorical in it must be ascertained by another test. Let the reader calmly compare it with any of the books, Jewish or Christian, which are confessedly allegorical, and I shall be very much surprised if he is not struck with something more than a difference—with a direct opposition between them. I will give two instances, merely as hints; they might be multiplied indefinitely. The writer of the Epistle, in alluding to the Temple-worship, mentions the cherubim and the mercy-seat. Of these, he says, we cannot now speak particularly. Could any allegorist have resisted the temptation to speak most particularly on these subjects? Would not every circumstance of their form and position have furnished the text for endless analogies and spiritual applications? The writer of the Epistle spends a whole chapter upon the faith of the elders of the Jewish nation. That faith is illustrated by their common acts, their ordinary daily history. Abraham lives in tents, and waits for a son; is ready to offer him up. Moses is hid three months by his parents; refuses to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Could an allegorist have endured such vulgar events as these; would he not have dwelt on the significance of the names of the patriarchs; would not each act of their lives have been treated as remarkable because it was the type of something Divine or something future? And generally it may be affirmed that this writer, instead of seeking for shadows, is impatient of them—he is always desirous to translate them into something practical and substantial. While the allegorist avoids nothing so much as history, treats institutions as earthly secular things, the writer of the Epistle shows, as it seems to me, that the history and institutions of the land were the very instruments through which the Divine revelation was made to his countrymen, and by which their minds were awakened to receive

it. The passages which he quotes were all connected with different portions of the Jewish constitution, all familiar to the Palestine Jews in that connection. So far from suppressing this fact, it is his great desire that they should take notice of it. His whole art, if art it may be called, seems devised for the purpose of impressing this conviction more deeply upon them. Sometimes he dwells on a significant word, sometimes he neglects words—not quoting or translating with strict accuracy—if, by a deviation from the letter which would be instantly recognized, he could bring the subject of it more vividly before them, and show them that not in the words themselves, so much as in the fact or institution of which they spoke, lay the principle which he is setting forth. By such means, I conceive, he most effectually counteracted what was mischievous in his countrymen's reverence for institutions, while he justified it and placed it upon its right ground. For he showed how that which they were disposed to worship for its own sake had been a method of Divine education to bring out the great idea of a Son; the idea which was realized and fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The steps of this Divine education mark, it seems to me, the pauses and stages in the Epistle; if we trace them through it, we shall appreciate more fully its worth as an exposition of Scripture and of history.

I. I think it is evident that the passages quoted in the first chapter refer to the office of the Jewish KING. With one exception, they are all taken from the Book of Psalms. But that exception is a very significant one. It is: "I will be to Him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son." These words occur in the 7th chapter of the Second Book of Samuel. We are told there that David, after he had overcome his different enemies, designed to build a Temple to God. A prophet informs him that his purpose is approved, but that it shall not be accomplished in his reign: "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his Father, and he shall be my son." Every Hebrew

would at once turn to this passage as to the title-deed of the Jewish kingdom, the formal enunciation of the principle upon which it stood. The words affirmed directly that God had set it up; that the visible king held of the Invisible,—was a witness of His power and presence. They declared that the house of David, the family reigning from generation to generation, denoted the permanence of the Divine rule, and the permanence of the nation in Him. So much all would have confessed. The object of the writer is to show that more was contained in this document than the mere establishment of a human kingdom by an act of Divine will. When He who established it said, "I will be to him a Father," he signified that there was an actual relation between Himself and the human monarch, yea between Himself and the nation and all its members. This was the mystery which had been felt by every true Jewish king to be the basis of his power; to be that which made it real power; to be that which separated it from arbitrary power: losing this faith, he became a self-willed tyrant. Yet it *was* a mystery, and one which it might require ages to unfold.

That a Greek should look up to one who as he believed dwelt on a high Thessalian hill, in the midst of a council of warriors, like his own chiefs, and should say, "Father of gods and men," was nothing strange. That a Hebrew king should dare for a moment to use such language, to indulge such a thought, respecting the I AM: Him whom no man had seen or could see, Who dwelt in thick darkness, from Whom the Law had come forth amidst lightnings and thunderings, this was wonderful. Was it that the awe of Jehovah had grown less since the days of Moses? No; surely we can find no deeper expression of it than in the songs of the shepherd-king, in Solomon's consecration prayer. As the sense of nearness to the Divine Majesty became more realized, it seemed that its awfulness was more realized also. How this could be, must be learnt from the experience of those who lived under this kingdom; and to them the Epistle next refers. The quotations from the Psalms seem purposely taken from different parts of the history, that we may see in what opposite

circumstances, through what conflicts with foes, individual and national, the idea was developed in the minds of holy Israelites, of One to whom the words, "I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son," might be strictly spoken, and in whom they must be spoken to the visible King.

The second Psalm speaks of a time when Jewish and Heathen foes were both rebelling against the anointed king. The holy man, whether he were the king himself or some other, is sure they will be confounded because there is a king seated not in the royal palace, but on the hill of Zion, where the Invisible Presence dwelt, to whom the Lord is saying, "Thou art my Son." The writer of the 97th was probably surrounded, in Samaria, or in Phœnicia, by worshippers of heroes and demigods, who taunted him with atheism, and it may be awakened doubts in his own mind whether homage to an unseen being could be real. The thought, "The Lord reigneth,"—He *is* the true King,—comes to his relief; but it expands into another, without which it would be insufficient—the assurance that the King would raise up a true image of himself to put down all false images; that there was One to whom he was even then saying, "Worship him, all ye angels," heroes, gods, whatever ye be. The singer of the 45th Psalm, living in some time of festivity, celebrating a royal bridal, has the vision of a higher king, one perfectly loving righteousness and hating iniquity, the true bridegroom of the nation and of humanity. The writer of the 102d, "sitting like a pelican in the wilderness, like an owl in the desert," "reviled by his enemies all the day," is sustained by the belief of a king who would reign over his own people and over the heathen, because "the earth was His; He had of old laid the foundation of it, and the heavens were the work of His hand; they might perish, but He would endure." Finally, the writer of the 110th Psalm who probably saw no external signs of royalty, but who lived when a priest was fulfilling the office of the civil ruler, perceives that the perfect King must unite the priestly and kingly functions, and that to such a one the Lord is saying, "Sit thou upon my right hand till I make thy foes thy footstool."

These were, of course, passages upon which a Hebrew would delight to dwell, as indicating the glory of his nation, the special privileges which belonged to it and were in reserve for it. But was this all that they actually—all that the holy men of past times felt that they denoted? Surely not. David had asked, in those words which I have taken for my text, and which throw the clearest light upon all around them, "What is *Man*, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." He was led to feel not only the greatness of himself, or an Israelite, but the greatness of man through this revelation of a Divine King.

The elevation of the Jew could not be meant to degrade the human race to which he belonged; must be meant to raise it, to bear witness of the state for which God had created it. The first records of Jewish history had declared that all creatures were put under man, that he was made the king of the world, and in the image of God. As yet the words seemed to be but poorly realized: the ruler seemed to be the slave of the servant; the homage of the creatures to man was often exchanged for his homage to them; one death claimed dominion over them both. Still the feeling lay deep in all human hearts, that dominion over the earth, intercourse with heaven were intended for them; still they had wrestled with Death as if it were a strange intruder, an unlawful usurper. The vision then of one in whom not the Jewish nation only, but humanity, had its true head and representative, must be realized. And did not the Hebrew Christians believe there was one who had exercised kingship here on earth over all material things, had proved the great tyrant to be an intruder and had overcome him? Though they saw not yet all things put under man, did they not see Jesus, who for the suffering of death was made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor?

II. The Jewish king especially embodied the idea of dignity, glory and superiority. These qualities were, no doubt, often ex-

hibited in deepest weakness; they involved condescension to the meanest; the history of David showed that the anointed ruler might be the fugitive and outlaw. Still these were not the first recollections which would present themselves to any one considering the office, nor did the writer of the Epistle desire they should. The tendency of those whom he addressed was to lower the dignity of man; to make him the servant of angels. This tendency they exhibited even when they spoke truly and nobly of Christ as the poor man; for they meant by those words that He was nothing else, that He had no royalty.

But there was an order of men who brought this character directly before the mind of the Jews. The prophet or holy man was indeed the reprover of kings; he interpreted the nature of the office; he showed how it must be fulfilled; but he was himself the suffering Israelite. To this part of the economy the next quotations in the Epistle evidently relate; they touch upon the person of the new prophet—upon his individual feelings, and the witness which he bore, by his life rather than by his words. They show how he whose inspiration most raised him above other men, became, in virtue of that inspiration, more completely their brother, even in the depth of their sorrow; how it obliged him to greater trust, to more entire dependence than other men; how, instead of lifting him above human relations, it turned those relations into means through which he himself apprehended, and enabled others to apprehend, the divine relation. There is a strange ambiguity in the words which the writer of the Epistle wishes us to take notice of. It could only be removed when it was clearly shown, how he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one nation. As the idea of a king could only be realized in one who showed that he had dominion over nature and over man; so the idea of a prophet could only be realized in one who showed that he had entire fellowship with the lowest estate of men, in one who because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, himself took part of the same; who, because they were all their lives long subject to the fear of death, himself entered into and overcame it.

III. In each of these offices, that of the King and that of the Prophet, there had been evident signs of incompleteness—a witness of something mightier behind, which would be revealed: And each seemed obviously to require the other; the meaning of neither could be fulfilled till they were united. But was there this incompleteness in the character of Moses, their first legislator? Was not the practical authority of the Divine King marvellously united in him with that of the suffering Prophet? Had not the awful Name been spoken to him out of the bush? Had he not been forty days and nights in the Mount, in communion with the LORD GOD of Israel? Yet had he not also been the guide of the people through the desert, bearing their burdens and sins, feeling with them, interceding for them? There must have been a thought of this kind in the mind of every Jew; and these Christian Jews who were disposed to look upon their Master as the great reviver and restorer of the Jewish law and polity would be tempted to it as much as any. If the writer had followed a chronological order he would have met this difficulty first. But he could not have met it effectually if he had not shown beforehand what was implied in their later history, in the covenant with David, in the teaching of him and the holy men who followed him. He had gathered from them that a Son of God had been promised to the Jewish nation, and that its greatness could not be realized except in such a person. Now, admitting all the glory which was ascribed to Moses, it was certain that he had never claimed *this* honor—that he had expressly disclaimed it. He had proved himself a faithful servant—the servant in a great house or family which God was raising up. If there were such a Divine family, it must have a ruler as well as a servant. The acts and words and office of Moses, too, must have been a prophecy; a Son of God must have been implied in them, who should fully realize the idea of one admitted into the Divine converse, and sharing human griefs. The legislator must be a witness of things to be spoken hereafter. Did not the journeyings of the Israelites through the wilderness, as they were felt then, and interpreted afterwards, betoken an imperfection?

Their state was one of progress and transition. They were on their way to a place of rest—a rest to which Moses was not allowed to bring them. All the way this promise was set before them ; they were to trust that it would be fulfilled,—their distrust was the cause that they, and even that their leader, died without seeing the land.

IV. Into that land, however, Joshua led them. Was not this then the accomplishment of the promise ? This question leads the writer of the Epistle to notice another Jewish institution—one which had been pronounced holy by Moses, but in such language as showed it to have been possessed from an earlier time, —one which had mightily affected the life of every Jew, and which he still preserved with almost idolatrous reverence. The sabbath day had been expressly connected with the hope of a rest in Canaan. But the keeping of it had been enjoined in other and solemner words, which connected it with the Rest of God. The twofold idea of God resting in the beholding of that which he had made, and of man resting in the beholding of God, had been embodied in it. And all through the writings of holy men (one or two passages might serve as an index to hundreds), we trace the sense of a higher rest, not attained by the conquest of Canaan,—of a day implied in that sabbath-day,—of something in its meaning not yet accomplished, though the works had been finished from the foundation of the world. No Jew, the writer contends, could understand the Scriptures, could expect the fulfilment of the promise made to the Fathers, who was not looking for such a rest : he must be repeating the sin of his forefathers —the very sin for which they had fallen in the wilderness, the sin of resting in the present and the visible, of not confessing their relation to an unseen Lord, and looking to have all the darkness which hung over that relation removed. Nothing but the acknowledgment of One in whom God could rest and man could rest—in whom the fellowship between heaven and earth was fully realized—could satisfy the meaning of the sabbath-day, or those hopes it had awakened in the hearts which truly profited by it.

V. And such a one he goes on to say must be a priest, the High Priest of the Universe. This office was naturally more prominent in the eyes of a Hebrew Christian of this time than any other. It might be much degraded in its present possessors, but it was that which Aaron had fulfilled; they had the law which ordained it; they had all the intervening history of its preservation and restoration. This subject henceforth becomes the leading one of the Epistle. The course of the argument may be shortly traced. First, the writer considers what a Priest must be. He is appointed for man in things that pertain to God; he must therefore share the feelings and wants of men, and there must be clear evidence that he does not take the office himself, but is called to it by God. So much the Jew would at once concede, and he would say, "Our priest satisfies both conditions. He is one of our nation; he belongs to us and feels with us, yet he is one of a tribe openly designated by the words of the Law, to this express service." True, says the writer of the Epistle, but does this legal designation of a Priest satisfy the idea of the High Priest which your holy men, brought up under the Law, themselves had? The 110th Psalm speaks of a Priest after the order of Melchizedek—speaks of such an order as the highest conceivable. What kind of order was this? Your early records tell you that Abraham, returning from the slaughter of the kings, found a priest already dwelling in that which was afterwards the holy city. His name denotes him to have been a king. Nothing is said of his father or mother, or of the nation to which he belonged; yet Abraham, the father of your nation, the ancestor of the Levitical tribe, recognizes his right to the office which he holds, and performs an act of homage to him. And the Psalmist thinks of *this* kind of priesthood, resting on no formal enactment, denoted by no tribe or national distinction, as the highest of all. He evidently supposes that a priest may be—that the highest Priest must be—called to his office in some more direct, absolute way than by an outward Law, however solemnly proclaimed. And does not the writer of the Psalm himself intimate what the designation of such a priest must be? The oath—"Thou art

my Son, this day have I begotten thee;"—must lie at the root of such an appointment: only a *filial* priest can satisfy the idea of a priest. Only one who, like Melchizedek, is both king and priest,—only one who is manifested by some tokens to be a Son of God,—can really satisfy the first condition of a perfect Mediator. He goes on to say, that only such a person can satisfy the second condition—that the sinfulness of the priest was itself a hinderance, the great hinderance, to that entire fellowship and sympathy with a sinful creature, which is implied in the idea. Only One, holy, harmless, separate from sinners, could really be so touched with the feeling of their infirmities, as to be the needful Intercessor for them. Only One who has been on earth, and suffered death, and passed into the heavens; only One who is now at the right hand of God, could have that permanent priesthood, which the legal succession in the family of Aaron had indicated. Only One who had actually gone out of the visible world into the presence of the unseen God, could lead men into it.

VI. The idea of a constitution anterior to all formal enactments, grounded, as we might say, in the nature of things, or, as it is here expressed more devout and accurately, on the "oath of God," has been distinctly brought before us in these remarks upon the priesthood and upon Melchizedek; it has evidently been assumed throughout the letter. Upon it the writer proceeds to ground another doctrine. Christ, he says, being ascended on high, has become the Mediator of a New Covenant. Now the Jew's Covenant was of all things the most sacred in his eyes. He might reluctantly acknowledge that the coming of Christ had made it more comprehensive, that the Gentile had been admitted into some of the privileges of it. But it was made expressly to his fathers and to him; the highest gift he could claim was the fulfilment of it. No conviction could be sounder—his teacher would by all means strengthen him in it. But what fulfilment was he looking for? The priesthood was felt to require something deeper than a mere ordinance or appointment. The Covenant, too, must rest on something deeper. Their prophet

Jeremiah had felt that it must. He had spoken of a New Covenant to be made in the latter days—of which this should be the tenor: "I will write my laws in their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." The prophet had evidently seen that the Covenant, too, was based upon something older than the mere choice of a particular family or nation. It must be referred to that constitution in the Son of God, which exalted not a nation only, but mankind. It, too, could only be fulfilled, according to the prophet's anticipation, by the ascension of a Man to the right hand of God; by the gift of the filial Spirit, who should indeed write the Law in the heart of the worshipper—who should change it from the law of a carnal commandment into the power of an endless life.

VII. Having established the twofold assertion, that Man was brought into the presence of God by the ascension of Christ, and that he was treated as a spiritual being, to be ruled and guided by God's Spirit, he proceeds to consider the divine Worship. The ark which had gone along with the Jews through the desert, the temple which was raised on mount Zion, had testified to them from generation to generation, that the Lord was in the midst of them. Their disbelief of it had been their greatest sin, the ground of all other sins. And yet this Temple had itself borne witness that there was something hidden from the view of the worshipper. There had been a veil over the mercy-seat. They had been reminded by those very figures which they prized so much, that into the pure and perfect presence of Him whom they served they were not yet admitted. Yet surely every thing in their Covenant and their discipline had been teaching them to be satisfied with nothing less than this. Every thing had been meant to draw away their minds from the visible to the invisible, from the shadowy to the real. If they had entered into the temple-worship—if they had really sought the Unseen Presence—they could not be content until the figures were exchanged for the reality; until they had the power of entering into that reality—of holding actual and awful communion with the living God.

VIII. But what was the Veil? Those other services, the purifications, told them what it was. There was something overshadowing the heart of the worshipper, which separated it from Him to whom it would draw nigh. It was the inner man that aspired to that fellowship with the unseen God. It was within, in himself, that he found the obstruction. All the appointed ceremonies for the purification of the flesh, reminded him of the fact, but could not change it. The Covenant told him that there was something from which he must be separated, in order that he might be united to God. The blood which was sprinkled on the book of the Covenant, upon the worshippers, and upon all the vessels of the temple, seemed to connect purification in some way with death. All this was a wonderful education, doubtless, for the mind and spirit of the man; but, like every other part of the Jewish discipline, it was leading him to perceive a relation between the Creator and himself, which must subsist in a living person, not in a *thing*—an animal; leading him to expect that that Person would in some manner show what *sacrifice* meant, what death meant, how that which seemed to divide every creature from the other, and to be the witness of his separation from God, could be the instrument and bond of his reconciliation.

IX. That the psalmists and prophets of the Jews learnt to feel that all purification was insufficient which did not reach the conscience, their solemn confessions and prayers abundantly prove. The 51st Psalm is only a specimen—though it may be the most remarkable—of the tone which pervades them all. But the mystery of Sacrifice itself, though connected with the purifications and with every other Jewish service, yet stood out distinctly as if it involved something deeper than all the rest; and it had revealed itself to them through still more fearful struggles and doubts, sometimes reaching to despair. The writer of the Epistle refers to the 40th Psalm, as illustrating the whole subject. He whose feelings are described there, seemed to himself to be sticking in deep mire where no ground was. There was a fathomless abyss within him which no ordinances of God, no pro-

visions of his grace that he knew or could imagine, were able to close up. But he waited patiently for the Lord, and by degrees he saw implied in that Institution, which of itself availed him nothing, One who could offer the real, acceptable sacrifice ; One who could say, "Lo ! I come : in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God...Yea, thy law is within my heart." This entire consent of the will to the divine will, he saw must be the ground of all sacrifice. Resistance to that divine, loving will, he saw had been the curse and misery of man —that which divided every one from his fellows. He who delighted to do it, who had the law in the heart, must be THE Man. He must fulfil the idea of Man ; and yet He must be the Son of God, in whom the very Being and Character of God would shine forth. All other notions of sacrifice, he saw, were either leading to this or else were false : this only could take away the sin of the world, its disobedience and selfishness. He who could offer it must be the reconciler of God and man ; the living complete atonement between heaven and earth ; He who by the Eternal Spirit offered Himself to God, could alone purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God ; could alone give that Spirit by which all creatures united in Him might offer themselves as sacrifices well pleasing to the Father.

Thus far we have traced the evolution of that great truth which, according to the writer of the Epistle, lies at the root of the new Economy through the different portions of the old. I would beseech you not hastily to exchange this view of the Jewish Scriptures for a more modern one. Oftentimes learned men seem to satisfy themselves with a phrase of this kind, "a Theocratic Idea lies," they say, "at the basis of the Jewish commonwealth." Now I am far from affirming that such an expression means nothing to those who use it. They should ask themselves seriously *what* it means,—should determine that they will not be the victims,—as so many in all ages have been—of their own generalizations. Still it may convey the kind of apprehension which they have upon this subject more correctly and honestly than a form of language which would seem to me more real and living.

But I would earnestly remind you, that we do not by such paraphrases attain to any nearer conception of this writer's meaning; that, on the contrary, we destroy it altogether. *He* thought that the living God had actually made Himself known to the Jewish people; that He was their King and Teacher; that their institutions were His institutions; that through them, and through every event of their history, He was educating them to the knowledge of Himself. This education he affirms was bearing towards one object. He would speak to men in the latter days by a Son; by One who had always been a Son; who was the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person; in whom He made the worlds. By what methods He unveiled this Son to the hearts and spirits of His servants, showing them that He was implied in every part of their polity; that their life, personal and social, was intelligible only in Him; that they could only attain their true stature as Israelites and as men, when they were permitted fully to behold themselves and to behold God in Him, we learn from those passages which I have here been considering. It seems to me that we cannot gain much by reducing these passages under the general formula, "They merely set forth the theocratic idea of a Jew;" but that by patiently considering them, we may know, a little better than we are wont to do, what that theocratic idea was. We may find that it was no notion of a Being sometimes interfering by strange acts in the administration of this world's affairs; or of a sovereign determining of his mere pleasure that a certain nation should be better than all others; or of a lawgiver laying down arbitrary rules to be observed under certain terrible penalties, and the promise of certain rewards. These notions might arise very frequently in the minds of Jews; they had such a relation to the truths which they counterfeited, that it was easy to justify them by particular words and acts viewed apart from the whole sense and object of the revelation. But they were, under one form or other, precisely the notions which the prophets of old had rebuked; in opposition to which they had proclaimed the Lord God of righteousness, who, by a divine order, devised, directed by Himself, was leading His creatures away from the

idols of sense which divided and brutalized them, into the knowledge of Him, the unseen and living Lord, the God of all the families of the earth, and thus into the free exercise of the capacities which that knowledge alone could satisfy, and of every other capacity which He had bestowed upon them for their good and His glory.

LECTURE III.

THE FILIAL DISPENSATION.

HEBREWS XI. 39—40.

And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

HOWEVER desirable it may be to understand rightly the sense in which the Jews were subject to a divine Ruler, we are often told that the question is one only of historical interest. That crisis which the writer of the Epistle looked for, was, it is said, the termination of theocratical government. This opinion seems to be maintained with almost equal strength by those who believe the Jewish theocracy to have been real, and by those who suppose it to have been a mere conception or habit of thought characteristic of a Semitic people. The former express themselves in words of this kind; "The Jewish nation stood alone in the world. The other nations were under a general providential direction; the Jews were in a peculiar sense under a divine King. Not merely the provision for their bodies, the time of their births and deaths, was appointed by the Lord of all; the order of their society was established and directed by Him, towards a particular end. When that end was accomplished it was no longer needful that such a government should exist among men. The awful words, which were heard in the temple, "Let us depart," the events which interpreted these words, showed that it had ceased. The Canon of Scripture became

the one record of its existence. The others speak thus: "In the infancy of society it was desirable, perhaps necessary, that men should feel themselves under some mysterious guidance. Not only the Hebrews spoke of such a rule; each nation fancied it had some tutelary divinity; most were led by conquests, or by mixture with other people, to enlarge their mythology; thus they lost the definite sense of *a* Governor which they had at first; some, the Greeks especially, by degrees found a philosophical explanation of their early personifications. The Hebrews, separated by circumstances and rigid customs from other lands, preserved the feeling of their tribe for a much longer period; the priests kept it in existence by artificial contrivances when the nation had really outlived it; at last it could endure no longer; the army of Vespasian destroyed it along with the shrine in which it had so long dwelt. Thenceforth the world began a freer course; often, indeed, haunted and oppressed by the old theocratic decrees, revived and assuming new forms; but gradually emancipating itself from such dreams, and struggling toward a period of full development, when they should be dispersed altogether."

We may concede at once to this last class of reasoners two points in which they are at variance with the former. In whatever sense the Jewish nation was peculiar it was not so in this sense, that it alone of all people recognized a divine government. In whatever sense the Jewish institutions were peculiar they were not so in this sense, that the other nations had nothing corresponding to them. Among those which we have seen passing under the review of the writer of this Epistle, only one was exclusively Hebrew. The sabbath-day belonged strictly to the Israelite. Kings, prophets, lawgivers, priests, temples, purifications, sacrifices, were to be found everywhere. Will it be said that there was nothing common between these names in the Hebrew and the Gentile use of them? Does not history tell us clearly that in every land the conviction existed, that the visible king must have an invisible counterpart; that there must be men whose words proceeded from a fountain of inward inspiration;

that law must have a divine authority and sanction; that buildings must be set apart to some distinct permanent object of worship; that the worshipper must be separated from earthly pollutions; that the worshipper must offer to the God that which had been given to him, that which was dearest to him, even himself. Had not these institutions a like signification to the Jew? Was he sent into the world to tell men, "The convictions which your institutions indicate are false, are untenable, are merely the fruits of your own invention or wit?" Was he not rather commissioned to say, "These convictions are true; deeply true, and you *must* have received them from God. For see how you have corrupted them by your inventions. The invisible King is not the image of the visible, but his archetype; the inspiration of the prophet is wholly spiritual, not produced by the exhalations of any fountain; it is the I AM, not a wood-nymph, who teaches the lawgiver; the priest enters an unseen Presence of which he may conceive no likeness; the idol in the Temple destroys its witness for the distinction of God from the works of his hands; purifications must signify that it is the inner man who approaches the unseen living God, or they signify nothing; sacrifices must express the submission of the lower will to the true divine absolute will, they cannot be the means of bringing the higher will into consent with the lower." Was it not the great sign of the Jew's high calling, that he was able to bear this witness to the world, against its evil tendencies and his own? His covenant was, "In thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." I cannot conceive a clearer evidence of the reality of his covenant, a more wonderful explanation of its meaning than this, that he did not trample upon the faith of mankind, but justified it; preserved it from perishing under the mass of evil with which it had become encrusted; foretold that the blessing which he expected for himself would satisfy the desire of all nations, that the glory of Israel would be a light to lighten the Gentiles. From first to last he testified against those idolatries which of necessity divided the nations from the one Lord in whom they might be one. There is no pretext then for the notion that the

theocracy would of course pass away, when the exclusive position of the Jewish nation became no longer tenable, because it was bound up with that exclusive position. Suppose it to be a truth, and not a fiction, it was a truth for mankind; it was asserted to be such by the cries of all the people of the earth; it was asserted to be such by the Jewish separation.

If, on the other hand, it were a fiction, and not a truth, I quite admit that it, like all other fictions, could only last a certain period, and that the destruction of Jerusalem was an event which was as likely as any to determine its existence,—nay, was one which it could scarcely survive. Only I contend that those who maintain this hypothesis, must do something more than merely repeat the phrases, "proper to an infantine state of society;" "preserved beyond" its natural date by the skill of priests;" "crushed at last by the Roman legions"—which may be so easily repeated when they have once been learned by heart. It becomes them to show by what other belief than this, that the unseen Lord was their King, the Israelite was preserved from that subjection to sensual impressions, which is commonly considered a great characteristic of infancy, and was characteristic of him in spite of his Semitic derivation. It becomes them to show by what other faith than this he was enabled to resist the taunts and persecutions of priests and prophets in a hundred groves and high places, who accused him of being irreligious, even atheistic, and whom he could only answer by saying, "Whether I be religious I know not and care not; I adhere to the Covenant which God made with my fathers and with me; I obey his law." Lastly, they ought to consider whether the belief has ever passed out of the heart of any living man, that his personal and social life is as sacred as the course of the planets and the succession of day and night; whether that belief has not been strongest when men have been most brave and free, weakest when they have been most base and cowardly; whether it be not easier for one whose heart and reason are awake, to think of the order of nature as exempt from the habitual government of a divine will, than to think of himself, his relations to his fellow-

men, the evolution of events, the order of history under such a condition?

The writer of this Epistle certainly could not have borne such a contemplation. His mind had been formed in the belief that the more perfectly man is brought under the divine government, the more blessed his state is; that to escape from it is to be accursed. His conviction that the greatest blessing the world ever received had just been vouchsafed to it, did not change this belief, but deepened and established it. He speaks of the Patriarchs as *looking for* "a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker was God." Their faith, he says, substantiated the promise, but they did not receive it: the actual gift was reserved for another day. Nay (and he applies the words to the Jews in every stage of their history) *they without their children could not be made perfect.* He exhorts the Christians of his day to believe that *they had received a kingdom which could not be moved.* He tells them that the coming earthquake, *which must shake not earth only, but heaven*, would make it manifest. The natural inference from such words certainly must be, that our Lord's ascension would lead to the establishment of some fellowship of a larger, deeper, diviner character than that which had existed formerly. I cannot understand how they could convey any other meaning to a Hebrew Christian.

He knew what had been told him of the fathers of his nation. The sense of belonging to a divine kingdom had gone with them all their lives through; the dread of death which sometimes seized them was the dread of not finding that kingdom again when they had passed into the unseen world—of being beyond the region of the divine order and government. The hope which sustained them was, that He who is and was and is to come, must reign, here and everywhere: that there could be no corner of His universe over which He would not one day assert his dominion. And now, says the writer of the Epistle, He whom they looked for is come, the Son over the house; the King in whom the right is. And the *city that hath foundations* is revealed, and you have received a kingdom. His discourse of the past

swells into poetry. His vision of the present and the future becomes almost a rapture. Could he mean to deceive those whom he was thus preparing for the most tremendous and actual calamities? Must he not have deceived them, if his sense of the words "city and kingdom" did not in the least correspond to that which for generations had been affixed to them?

There is, however, a passage wherein the writer speaks *of a world to come which is not subject to angels.* Here, it has been said, he undoubtedly alludes, not to an earthly, but a heavenly society, to one upon which men enter after death. If so, why may not this passage determine the meaning of those which are most ambiguous? Why may not the City and the Kingdom, as well as the "World," point to a state wholly celestial? I have no doubt that all these words do express the same idea; that one as much as another denotes a state, in the purest, strictest sense of the words, *heavenly;* that this state is one which nothing but death can fully disclose to any human being, seeing that He who opened it did Himself first overcome the sharpness of death. But if the world which is not subject to angels, be one into which men do not *enter* till death, the argument of the Epistle would be set at nought. The writer of it maintains that by Christ's resurrection and ascension he had claimed for man the blessing of fellowship with Him who is Lord of angels. In the earlier stages of his growth, when he had not yet understood the highest capacities of his being, though they were unfolding themselves under the divine education, when he had not yet realized his true position—though God was in different methods discovering it to him—there was reason enough why he should feel himself subject to angels, why he should suppose that they stood between him and the High and Holy One. His privilege, his duty, was now utterly to deny such subjection, such mediation; to reject it as treason against that Lord who had taken his nature and invested him with his spiritual glory.

You see at once that this statement would have been worth nothing, if it had been possible to reply, "Yes; after death we may doubtless come into a state like that which you describe;

on earth we must still, according to your own showing, remain subject to angelic rulers, be dependent upon the help of angelic intercessors." The world to come whereof the Epistle speaks, cannot then, I conceive, answer to our ordinary notion of a future state; it must denote some kind of order established among human beings even here; one which was not yet shown to be the divine order of the universe, but of which Christ's coming was to all who understood its meaning, the clear indication, the corner-stone. In that sense it will accord perfectly with the idea of a city or kingdom, to which the Jew had been trained by his long course of discipline. For he had never been taught to look at the invisible world as altogether separate and remote from that in which he was living. In the daily toil of life, amidst his flocks and herds, amidst his children, on the judgment-seat, in the battle-field, he had sought God and found Him. Could that have seemed to him a more perfect state of things in which heaven and earth should be hopelessly divided? Above all, could this be the effect and blessing of His appearing, who was the Son of God and the Son of Man, who had perfectly hallowed each, and who was gone up on high? Would not the change he had reason to expect, be rather that the dream of a ladder set upon earth and reaching to heaven, should now become a firm, substantial reality?

But what indications were there that such a society would rise out of the ruins of the Jewish commonwealth? Every institution which the heathen had received as the witness of a connection between the visible and the invisible world, which the Jew had recognized, as proceeding from the Lord of all, had lost its original meaning, had become changed into something which contradicted and subverted that meaning. The idea of a king ruling in the name of an unseen King, was surely not preserved in the Herodian princes, or in any of the tetrarchs or sovereigns, who governed by the permission of Rome in its provinces. Practically that idea had been merged in one part of the earth as much as another, in the acknowledgment of an emperor, a commander of armies, in his own apprehension and that of his sub-

jects the real King of kings and God of gods. The Prophet, from whom men had asked a higher truth than they could discover for themselves, was converted among the heathen into the lying augur; if any one claimed the name in Judæa, it was on the warrant of being a more reckless assassin than the rest of his countrymen. The Law in which the Greek had heard the Eternal Voice, upon the awe of which Roman greatness had stood, was believed to rest on the will of the Cæsar; the confidence of the Jew that he possessed *the* divine Law was an excuse with him for the perpetration of every crime. The sabbath-day had been a main reason for calling Christ a blasphemer and condemning him to death. The priesthood in all lands seemed to have grounded itself upon the denial of any thing not visible. Abominations were set up in all the temples, might soon be set up in the temple in Zion. The rites for purification were changed elsewhere into filthy orgies—the Jewish rulers were practicing them at the time they taught the people to shout, "Crucify Him!" before Pilate's judgment-hall. Sacrifices were prized in Rome and Jerusalem, as means of purchasing the right to sin.

If from these spectacles you turned to the different Christian assemblies, there was indeed, amidst much that was discouraging, a beautiful realization of human brotherhood, of devotion to an unseen object. But how would a bystander, especially if he were a Jew, have regarded the ordinances by which these societies were distinguished? Would he not have said, "Truly you preserve the ceremony by which we admit Gentile converts to the privileges of the outer sanctuary; you say this is a sufficient sign to you of being admitted into God's covenant; you have again a rite which seems to be a bond or love-pledge to a departed Friend; you permit those whom He chose as His apostles to exercise a kind of fatherly government over you, and you have provided for a special emergency arising out of the outward, material wants of your members, by delegating some of the duties, which these apostles at first took upon themselves, to other officers. But can you pretend that such customs as these,

which no awful penal edict proceeding from the throne of God has created or enforced, are any thing to compensate for the loss of those sacred institutions which all nations have confusedly recognized; which we have received in their purity from the Lord of all, and by Him have been taught to understand?"

We might fancy that both these objections had been overlooked by the writer of this Epistle. His allusions to the ordinances which belonged to the disciples of Jesus, as such, are rare. He assumes the existence of Christian assemblies, for he warns the Hebrew Christian not to forsake them; he speaks of Baptism once or twice, perhaps once of the Eucharist; the fact that there were persons bearing rule in the Church is mentioned incidentally, but the word which describes the rulers is the most indefinite that could have been selected. But the Jewish objection to the dignity and sacredness of the Christian ordinances had been encountered in a far more satisfactory manner; the whole doctrine of the Epistle is an answer to it. The Aaronic priesthood was established upon a formal positive law; *therefore*, contends this writer, did those who possessed it feel discontented with it. They craved for a priesthood resting, not on an outward commandment, but on the oath of God. The priesthood is but one application of this principle, though perhaps the most remarkable. Each institution is shown to be imperfect, in so far forth as it was merely an institution: till the eternal ground of it in the relation of Man to God, in the relation of the Divine Son to the Father, in the Self-affirming Being of God, was manifested, its truth and meaning were still hidden. When this ground had been declared, that converse of the spirit of man with God for which he had been educating it, would be in the fullest sense possible. Then the method, whatever it might be, which the divine Wisdom chose for setting forth the relationship of Humanity with God as a realized fact, and for enabling men, as sharers of that Humanity, to enter into the highest and most mysterious communion, would of necessity transcend all those previous methods, which, till they were seen in the light of that whereto they were leading, seemed only formal and arbitrary.

Supposing this principle to be admitted, the Christian was entitled to say, "Just because these ordinances of ours have that character which you have ascribed to them,—because they do not come forth clothed with legal penalties, but were merely enjoined in a few loving words, because they speak of a relationship to One Unseen and to all His brethren, because they involve an obedience of the inner man to an authority which can enforce no other; therefore do they embody the whole mystery of that New Dispensation, which law and letters could only at a distance shadow forth and describe. Our Master was in the water owned as the Son of God and the Spirit descended upon Him. We ask no other witness that it has pleased the Father to make us the sons of God in Him, and to endow us with His Spirit; no other proof that in us Jews, as well as in heathens, every thing which is our own, every thing which we do not derive from God, must and will be washed and purged away. Our Master said, the night he was betrayed, 'This is my Body, This is my Blood. Do this in remembrance of me.' We ask no other proof than this bread and wine, that place does not separate from Him; that we are truly with Him now that He has ascended on high, as He was with us when He came down and was born of a Virgin and died for us; that being with Him, we are united to all who own Him on this side of death and on the other: that He can raise us to fellowship with them and Himself, enabling us to give up our selfish position: that He can fill us with His own life, enabling us to give up our own life. We want no other ground for obedience to His Apostles, than the fact that He chose them. A fatherly rule we feel to be the highest rule—one which speaks to our spirits, not to our senses. A filial subjection we feel to be the most perfect subjection, because it is that subjection of the spirit which only the Divine Spirit can bestow."

Without the slighest exaggeration, then, the writer of this Epistle could speak of those whom he addressed, as having come to the heavenly Jerusalem, as being admitted into the company of the first-born, to the spirits of just men made perfect, as

being in the presence of Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and of God the Judge of all. Either the ordinances which had been given to them meant nothing—were mere formalities and therefore impious—or they meant this; they implied an actual fellowship between earth and heaven; they declared that man had been brought into the condition for which all the discipline of past ages had been preparing him. They said that the revelation of the Unseen God, which prophets and kings longed for, had been made to the children of the Covenant; they said that the words of that Covenant, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," were fulfilled, for that the blessing—emphatically the Jewish blessing, the glory of Israel—the knowledge of God, had by their seed been brought within the reach of all people and nations and languages; that a society had grown out of the defined, formal, national society, which could have no limitation, because its basis lay in the original constitution of Man, that is to say, in Him in whom all things were created; in his relation to the Father, of whose glory He is the brightness, of whose Person He is the express image.

The belief that a heavenly commonwealth or kingdom such as this, was already established upon earth, might sustain a Jewish Christian in the prospect of any possible dissolution of that fabric which God had raised up for his fathers and for him. It would at once explain to him why he was not to look for any new Sinai, for the creation of any order of priests by any formal edict to succeed the tribe of Levi, for the sudden appearance of any heir of the throne of David, or of any new dynasty to assume the place of the old covenant kings. By such expectations he would have shown that he had not entered into the divine purpose, that he had not taken in the prophetical idea, or was content to live without a real adequate fulfilment of it.

But was there no answer in the doctrine of the Epistle, to that part of the question which was suggested, not by a notion of the feebleness of Christian ordinances, but by the abuse and subversion of those institutions in which heathens and Jews had both

discerned a proof of the Divine Presence? These institutions still existed: there was no reason to suppose they would pass away in that judgment which overhung the Jewish nation. If they survived it what witness would there be upon earth that they had any worth—that they were not the original rightful property of the spirit of Oppression and Falsehood? The Jewish nation was bringing forth something larger and deeper than itself; it would die in its travail. How would its child, the New Society, be related to these old social forms? Would it stand aloof from them; would it extinguish them; would it cast them anew? To an unbelieving Jew or heathen such questions would have sounded simply ridiculous. What could these insignificant little bodies, the oldest of which could hardly maintain its ground in the country of its birth, have to do with the great kingdom of the world? How could the policy of the emperor and the intricate machinery of pagan life be affected by the presence of these men, more than of any other fanatics or criminals who might from time to time require to be restrained by the sword of justice or by a contemptuous toleration? But supposing a person in that or any later day to have believed that a stone had been cut out of the mountain without hands, which must in time break in pieces whatever opposed it, would this Epistle give him any help in ascertaining whether all or any of these old institutions could co-exist and harmonize with that power which had grown up in the midst of them; and if so, under what conditions? Let us examine this question in reference to each of them.

I. The Davidean king had been a witness for the permanence of the nation in an Unseen Lord; a witness that the king and the nation were alike in covenant with this Lord, that their union to each other stood in their common allegiance to Him; a witness against all idolatry or confusion of visible things with the Invisible Lord, as destructive of national existence; a witness against all Babylonian attempts at universal dominion, as rebellious and impious efforts of the creature to become absolute and independent.

These principles and objects of the Jewish kingdom were for-

mally enunciated by lawgivers and prophets; were interpreted by the progress of the history. In them lay the undeveloped truth that One who is the Son of God and the Son of Man is the real Head of Humanity; the promise that He would be manifested as the Lord of the universe.* Among those who believed that this truth had been brought to light, this promise accomplished, was there any place for a visible king?

If it were true that Humanity had been glorified, there could be no one claiming to be a king of *the* exclusively righteous *Nation*. Yet still less than in former days could there be one claiming to be king of the *world;* a Roman emperor must more interfere with the belief of a crucified man reigning over the creatures whose nature he had taken, than a Babylonian monarch had interfered with the belief of an unmanifested King seated on the holy hill of Zion. If ever the conviction became strong in any number of hearts, that Jesus of Nazareth was really the King of kings and Lord of lords, it must struggle with the pretensions of the Cæsar to that title, till one or other should be worsted. But if out of that kingdom a number of distinct nations should appear, would it be any thing inconsistent with the idea of a new dispensation, that each of these should be ruled by some man confessing allegiance and subjection to the divine Son; reigning under the conditions of a covenant; judging the people in His name; even carrying on a war with false gods, not wholly unlike that of the old Jewish monarchs?

Is there any thing in that glorification of humanity and its forms whereof the Epistle speaks, to make such a result as this impossible? Might not one rather expect that if such a revival of national existence as I have imagined ever took place, this would be the great sign, in some sense the moving principle of it?

II. The Jewish prophet was a witness that men here upon earth are capable of receiving divine communications; that every true teacher must receive them; that only so far as he does receive them can he understand the past, the present, or the

* Fulfilling the command to "have dominion" over the earth.

future, or sympathize with the wants and sorrows of his fellow-men, or open to them the mysteries of God. The prophet, in his person as well as in his words, pointed to One who should perfectly fulfil these functions; should declare the councils of the Holy One have entire fellowship with men, reveal to them the Father of all. Were those who thought that such a fulfilment had actually come to pass, to say, "Now the office of the prophet is obsolete; we have no need of it?" Unquestionably they might have spoken thus respecting a multitude of accidents necessary to the Jewish prophet, partly in consequence of his exclusiveness, partly because the light was breaking in gradually upon himself and upon those he taught, through mists and vapors; partly because, till man's relation to God was fully set forth, divine inspiration must have seemed, to a certain extent, sudden and fortuitous. Unquestionably also it was now less possible than ever for any man to call himself *the* prophet, *the* teacher of the world. Under what form soever such a pretension should appear, it must wrestle with the belief that the divine filial prophet had actually appeared, till one or other were overcome. But is it credible that the assertion, "Man has been brought near to God; the Spirit of God has come down to dwell among men," could *extinguish* human inspiration; could do any thing but expand and deepen it, taking it out of the circle of strange phenomena, and exhibiting it as the rightful law of all thoughts, feelings, studies, acts; making it the anomaly and contradiction that gifts or powers by which any men, or any classes of men are made helpful to their brethren, should seem to be self-originated, and not to have their first spring and well-head, their continual renewal, in the Perfect Wisdom?

III. If the office of the Jewish Prophet imported a communication between the Spirit of God and the Spirit of man, and a submission of one to the other, that of the Jewish lawgiver as clearly imported that resistance to the divine will is characteristic of man—that there are tendencies in all men which lead to that resistance. It declared that there is a distinct, formal, divine punishment, for transgression; that *every disobedience must*

receive its just recompense of reward. This penal jurisprudence also was declared to proceed from the voice of God. Therein he spoke not by the creature, but directly, distinctly, terribly to the creature. The law was dispensed *by* the judge, or king; he could not dispense *with* it. He was not its master, but its servant. Its decrees and sentences applied as much to him as to the meanest of his subjects. At the same time, as the book of Deuteronomy shows (and that is but a key to all the books, and to the whole history), there was a distinct recognition in every period of a meaning in the law which was higher than its letter; of this meaning, as constituting its essential righteousness, as well as its mercifulness and graciousness; of this meaning being that which the true servant of the Covenant sought to fulfil and delighted in; the law of the Lord, in which he meditated by day and night. It remained clad in all its terrors for the evil nature which was in him; he used these terrors to coerce it; he knew that these terrors would prove their reality upon every one who set up idols in the place of God, or violated his neighbor's landmark; yet to be told that there was no law, or that he was not under it, would have been the heaviest, most frightful curse which could have been pronounced against him. How was the case changed in that new dispensation which rested upon the acknowledgment of One who had the law in his heart, who was content to do it, who perfectly fulfilled it? Assuredly there must have been this change. That idea, which was but an idea under the Jewish economy of something transcending positive penal law, having been accomplished in a Person, the law of life in that person must be the highest utterance of the Divine will—penal positive law only the secondary and subordinate. Man must be regarded first in his true state, in his relation to God; his evil rebellious nature must be treated as a hateful excrescence to be cut off. But so long as that evil nature exists, and testifies its existence by its fruits, can it ever be pretended that penal law has lost its function, or is absorbed into a spiritual power and principle? As every distinction becomes clearer and sharper in proportion as the light

is clearer and stronger, such a confusion would be even more incompatible with the character of the new economy than of the old. Supposing then the Christian Faith ever to become triumphant over that upon which the imperial power rested, supposing the acknowledgment of the Son of Man and Son of God to become the groundwork of society, one would surely expect, along with that revival of distinct nations and distinct national sovereignties of which I spoke, a revival also of reverence for Law, as having its source in the unseen majesty of God, its obligation in "The Lord saith." The deepest and most dreadful issues of all would indeed be connected, as they are in this Epistle, with the abuse of spiritual privileges, with the rejection of the divine voice speaking from heaven. But it would be surely acknowledged, just so far as the Christian principle was acknowledged, that the Divine Voice did still speak also, in language suitable to earthly notions, fleshly apprehensions; that it might still be heard in every denunciation of specific punishments for specific overt acts against the peace and order of a national society; that the judge was still a divine functionary to discern the boundaries of right and transgression, and all the police of the country, civil or military, divine instruments for asserting the one, and preventing the other, or executing wrath upon it; so that whenever unrighteous decrees were made, or wrong deeds habitually perpetrated by these powers, they should be felt to be violations of a trust which He from whom it had been received would come out of his place to avenge.

IV. As an illustration of the last topic, still more for its own sake, the sabbath-day requires especially to be considered in its relation to the new economy. Its obligation to a Jew rested on a literal positive law; yet it belonged to a period earlier than all positive, literal law: it spoke, as the Epistle tells us, of a rest accomplished; it spoke of a rest unaccomplished; it spoke of a rest of God, the rest of Creation; it spoke of a rest for man, the rest of deliverance from servitude; it spoke of man's rest as the image of God's rest; of man's rest as only perfect when he entered into the rest of God.

According to the doctrine of the Epistle, the former precept ordaining this as well as every other institution, was leading on to the discovery of a Person in whom its meaning was fulfilled; to the discovery of one in whom God and Man meet and are reconciled, in whom both may rest. Did this institution lose its significance for those who believed that this Person had been manifested? As in all other cases, the ground of the precept having been made known, the precept cannot be pleaded as a naked authority, apart from its ground. Any attempt to maintain a mere creation sabbath, because the commandment enjoins one, is to set aside the reason which the commandment itself gives. Some change therefore must be expected to take place in this appointment, or it would stand as an inexplicable anomaly in the new order of things. But could it be pretended that the relation of work to rest, which is set forth in the relation of the sabbath-day to the six—the difficulty of practically realizing and representing which was one of the main characteristic difficulties of the Gentile world, one which may be traced in all its mythology and philosophy—had ceased to exist, or needed less to be wrought into the order of time, into the tissue of human life, now than formerly? Could it be said, that because the meaning of man being made in the image of God was now revealed, the idea of the rest and work of man being images of the rest and work of God had lost its significance, or could less be expressed, or less needed to be expressed, in a practical form? Could it be contended that, because Christ had glorified the estate of poverty, the rights of the poor man which this ordinance had so blessedly asserted, and had so connected with what is most divine, must not henceforth be put forth in so simple, direct a method, or that the method must no longer be regarded as divine? Could it be said that because Christ had fully entered into the rest of God, this rest should not any longer be felt by the weary oppressed creature as a reality dawning upon him through his ordinary earthly experience?

V. That same entering of the Son of Man into the perfect rest of God, which substantiates the idea of the sabbath, sub-

stantiates also, according to the teaching of this Epistle, the idea of the Priest. The Jewish High Priest represented the holiness of the separated, sanctified nation; he was divinely elected to this dignity as the nation was elected to its dignity. His was a family designation, as all the Israelites constituted a family. He was the head of a body, a family of priests, all called to their office by formal consecration; he the representative of the nation as a whole, they of its individual members. He drew nigh to God in the name of the nation, offering its sacrifices, setting forth the greatness and holiness of the nation to be not in itself, but in Him who had taken it into covenant. Yet in all these respects the Epistle teaches us the office was imperfect. The designation was imperfect; it was merely legal, not significative of a direct relation between the priest and the Lord of all. It was a tribal, not an universal office; he represented at best the purity of a nation, not of humanity. He only *represented* this purity, but did not actually show it forth; he had for himself, as well as for the people, to make offerings for sin. He was not therefore effectually one with the whole people; sin separated him from them as well as from God. He did not actually enter into the presence of God; the figures of the Temple expressed that only at certain seasons the veil between the worshipper and his Creator could be withdrawn. Supposing the faith to establish itself, that a filial Priest had appeared, that he had the highest designation, that He was the representative of humanity, that He was perfectly pure, that He had perfectly sympathized with men, that He had sat down at the right hand of God—what place remained for priests upon earth? We must answer: If the argument of the Epistle signify any thing, for a *High* Priest there could be no place. He who should assume to be *the* Priest of the Universe, would by that claim interfere not with some accident of the New Dispensation, but with its primary idea; with that which for ages and generations had been unfolding itself under the divine education. Such an effort, however it might disguise itself, must struggle with the principle to which it is opposed till one or other be overthrown. Though this effort to es-

tablish a mortal High Priesthood should at first proceed from a real earnest wish to make the Invisible Priesthood more a fact to human consciousness, though it could actually be shown to have produced this effect, yet in it must lie hid—to be displayed one time or another—the denial of an actual relationship between man and God. Out of it must proceed the degradation of man's spiritual rights; the subjection to creatures; all the evils which the writer of this Epistle saw threatening the Palestine Christians. It must involve not merely the loss of the Christian idea of priesthood, but of the Jewish also—the formal adoption of the heathen notion, which the heathen himself struggled against as a corruption—that the priestly order is not the representative of Humanity, but is separated from it; not the head of a kingdom of priests, but one whom they were to admire, because he is wholly different from themselves. Without advancing a step beyond the experience of the world in its Jewish and heathen divisions, we might assume that this principle, lying in the very nature of man, would assault Christianity. Without advancing a step beyond the teaching of this Epistle, we may affirm what the effect must be if the tempter prevailed. But are we therefore to say, The idea of priests upon earth, of men witnessing of that filial High Priest who has ascended into the heavens, witnessing for the real relation between God and man, witnessing for the spiritual glory of Humanity, connected as an order from generation to generation, yet having no tribe limitation, standing not upon the law of a carnal commandment, but upon the gift of the divine Spirit; declaring that the oil of gladness is not theirs exclusively, that it goes down from the head to the skirts of his garment, that the powers, gifts, means of benefiting their brethren, which they receive, are signs that all gifts and powers bestowed upon any class of men for any work have the same source—are we to say that such an order of priests would be incompatible with any maxim of the new economy? Can we think that it would interfere with the heavenly and perfect character of the Head, or with the privileges of the body, or with the distinctness of any one of its members? Are we to say that

such an order would have only a figurative, not a real, right to the name of priests? In what one characteristic of the office would they be deficient, save those which were the incidents of an imperfect period, or that which is the one property of Him to whom they all refer themselves, and apart from whom they have no reality? Must we not rather think, that if the priestly idea dropped out of the circle of Christian ideas, the sense of what mankind had gained by the ascension of Christ would disappear also; that if it were limited to Him who has fully realized, and can alone fully realize it, the belief of his union with the creatures whom he has called his brethren, would grow feeble; that if it were claimed merely by the Christian body, the belief of the unity of that body in its distinct portions, and as a whole would evaporate, and merely a vague blessing be asserted for each person, the consciousness of which would be sufficient to exalt him in his own esteem, not to give him the practical assurance that he might draw nigh with a pure heart and spirit to God?

VI. It must have been a deeply interesting reflection to a Palestine Jew at the time this letter was written; "This temple made with hands is about to perish from off the earth; He said so who glorified it with His Presence, who called it His Father's house. We know that His glorified Body is the Great Temple of all; we know that we are spiritual temples in which He has promised to dwell. But supposing the earth should not at once be destroyed; supposing buildings for all earthly purposes should continue to be raised;—will those who hear the gospel of Christ and receive it, be prevented by that divine, mysterious faith of theirs, from raising temples to the Unseen Majesty of heaven and earth?" Once more the Epistle seems to determine the answer. A temple importing, as the Jewish temple did, that the veil was not withdrawn which separated men from God; a temple binding men to a figurative, not a real worship; leading them to think that the idea of God lay somewhere hidden in the forms of nature and art, and had not been embodied in the person of a man, must be at variance with the Christian revelation. And because the temptation to these dangers lay very near the heart of

men, and had continually re-appeared in the Jewish as well as the heathen world,—it was no unreasonable thought, that perhaps Christian men might for a time be turned away from the contemplation of outward forms, and of their connection with the invisible, or at least might be hindered from any elaborate effort to express their awe of the one through the other. But since the imagination, turned out of one direction, is likely to disport itself wildly in another; since it may play quite as mischievously with intellectual as well as with sensual shapes,—such a provision, needful for a time, might not perhaps continue. The temple of the Jews, instead of being in itself a means to idolatry, had been the great witness against it. Animal and earthly forms had been by it redeemed and dedicated to the Unseen God, that they might not be honored in themselves. The separation and consecration of a building had signified that God is not a Presence in earth or air, but a living Person. Such a testimony might not be less wanted in the new time, than in the old. The belief, that Christ had redeemed the earth by dwelling upon it, proved indeed that no portion of it was unholy. It could not prove that one or another place in the earth might not be set apart as a witness of its holiness—as an assertion of his dominion over it. He had gone into the unseen world; this might show that men were not to dwell among visible things; it could not show that visible things might not be converted into tokens of the invisible, —into means of withdrawing men from themselves. Christ had spoken in parables drawn from nature, and outward things, and then had promised to show men plainly of the Father. This might prove that the perfectly spiritual and pure vision is the highest and best thing of all, a blessing too which one as much as another, the poorest saint often more than the most learned, might attain. It could not show that He would not hereafter endow His servants, as he did of old, with the power of translating the language of earth into that of heaven; of compelling wood and stone to testify of the Holy and Infinite Presence, and of man's ascent into it, as they had testified to Greek minds of the human and the finite, and of men's power over it.

VII. The Church will speak to us to-morrow of One who was presented pure to God in substance of our flesh. Here we have the realization of that idea of purification which was expressed in various forms under the Old Economy. Some of these forms were manifestly adapted to the education of an Eastern people; a moral education beautifully blended with the removal of physical evil and the promotion of bodily health. If universality were given to these, the idea of a dispensation for all people and languages would be set aside; if sacredness were given to them merely because they had proceeded from a divine Lawgiver, law would be exalted above its end and meaning, in contradiction to the maxim which this Epistle so diligently enforces. If any outward purification should be used merely to denote the need of purification of the conscience, and not to show that it might be effected by a divine process, the difference between the new and old economy was destroyed. If outward purifications should be used as a substitute for inward purifications, not the Old Economy, but the pharisaical conception of it, would be restored. Lastly, if it were taught that any purifications, outward or inward, were to make men pure in themselves as apart from Him in whom the purity of man dwells, the central truth of the New Testament is denied. But the Jews of Palestine had been practically taught that an outward act of purification was the introduction into the Christian family. This act had every sign of universality; it would be intelligible to all people in all lands. The words which accompanied it showed that it did not speak of any thing legal, but expressly of adoption into a filial covenant; of any thing external, but of service to an Unseen and Holy Lord; of any thing merely prospective, but of a purity already obtained for men in Christ; of any thing unreal, but of a purification and deliverance of the heart and conscience from the corruptions of the world and flesh and the temptations of the Evil Spirit, to be wrought by the indwelling of a Divine Spirit. To suppose that this token of an accomplished and ever-continuing blessing, in which was gathered up the whole purpose to which the Old Economy was pointing—the great revelation of the New—could ever become ob-

solete, would have been the same thing, as to suppose that every imperfect apprehension of Judaism, every false and dark dream of heathenism would be allowed to prevail against the truth which had come to satisfy the one and to disperse the other. Such apprehensions and dreams might return—in all probability they would; but in every age this simple rite of Baptism, interpreting itself by the words of Scripture, would be found the great barrier against them.

VIII. I have been led unawares into the next subject of which the Epistle speaks—that of the *Covenant*. It would be an abuse of language to speak of this as a Jewish institution; it was rather that which explained all the institutions, which gave the Israelite an assurance that they were really divine. Believing in it, Kings, Priests, Law, Sabbath-days, Temple, Purifications, were all unspeakably precious; losing his faith in it, all were dreary formalities, dead letters—only temptations to worship idols or glorify himself. In the days of Ahaz, forgetfulness of the Covenant was the sin; then it led to the worship of Syrian idols, and to distrust in God's care for the family of David: in the days of Zedekiah it was the sin; then it led to wilful confidence that the armies of Nebuchadnezzar could not destroy the sinful city: in the days of our Lord's Incarnation it was the sin; then it led to a feeling that God could not really manifest Himself to His creatures, that He was afar off, and not nigh; to theories about Him, instead of faith in Him; to sects and parties, instead of national fellowship; thence to an incapacity of recognizing the true King; thence to the cry, "We have no king but Cæsar!" thence to ruin and extirpation. Now the Hebrew Christians were told in this Epistle, that the Old Covenant had passed away, that a new one had taken its place, of which they were the heirs. There were two important questions then to ask respecting themselves and all Christians in times to come: In what respects is this Covenant different from the Jewish? Will the effects of forgetting it be the same or different? To the first they could answer at once, if they understood the *doctrine* of the Epistle, A covenant of sonship is different from a covenant of servitude; adoption is better

than mere election. By circumcision we are cut off directly from other nations, implicitly from our own evil natures. In baptism the main thing is separation from the evil nature, only the accidental separation from any other people. Circumcision was Jewish; baptism is human; circumcision was the sign that the males of one country were taken by the Lord of all to be his subjects, baptism is the sign that men and women and children of all countries are adopted into one family, are sealed with the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

To the second question the *warnings* of the Epistle replied still more decisively. The Jewish Christians are reminded in it again and again, that their sin was essentially like that of their forefathers; for it was the sin of distrust, the sin of not believing that they had been taken under the divine government, and that God was really holding intercourse with them. But they are told also that the degree of wrong and peril in the two cases was very different. To disbelieve in the heavenly Covenant was another thing from disbelieving in the earthly: to deny that they had a birthright in the divine kingdom was casting away a blessing quite unlike that which Esau cast away; not to claim citizenship in the New Jerusalem was to choose an exile with which theirs who gave up the privilege of circumcision and the Law, that they might be like the heathen round about, could bear no comparison.

Supposing then the tendency to forget the Christian Covenant, which appeared so early in the Church, should under one form or another characterize it in all periods, now tempting men to make it less comprehensive, now to empty it of its spiritual reality and reduce it to a form; now to treat the sign of it as if it were something in itself, apart from Him who gave it as the witness of his relation to his creatures; now to make its worth contingent upon human acts or faith or feelings; now under some pretext or other to shut out baptized men from its privileges, powers, responsibilities;—we must expect from the intimations of Scripture that all other evils—superstition, recurrence to Judaism and heathenism, party spirit, godlessness would come in the train of

this sin ; that divine judgments would often bring men to the sense of it ; that as it contains in itself the principle of apostasy, this, if the warnings were not heeded, would be its ultimate issue.

IX. Following the order of the Epistle, we come at last to the subject of sacrifices ;—a subject which, closely as it is connected with that of the priesthood, may yet be treated distinctly. It should be remembered that the Jewish notion of sacrifice is not only expressed in the daily offering or in the yearly atonement. Every Jew was considered as a sacrificed man. The firstborn, the chief of the man's strength, the representative of the whole family, was formally devoted to God, was formally redeemed from death by the giving up of an animal. Sacrifice then was not merely a provision against transgression, and anomaly. It was regarded as the true state of a creature in covenant with God. By entering into that covenant, he gave himself up, the sign of death was put upon him ; he held his life as by respite, though it might extend to threescore years and ten, or to fourscore. Every offering of an animal day by day was a renewed confession of death being his natural condition, that from which God was keeping him. Every offering for a specific transgression was an acknowledgment of having departed from the true state of an Israelite, of having broken loose from allegiance to the King of the nation, from union to its members ; it was asking to be restored ; a witness that giving up of that which had caused the separation is necessary to restoration.

The Perfect Sacrifice realized the idea in both its aspects. He offered Himself as a Son, because His delight was to do the will of the Father in human flesh, as it had been before the worlds were. He offered himself for transgressions, because the creatures whose nature he bore, instead of delighting to do His Will, had rebelled against it—had lived to themselves, instead of devoting themselves to Him. How then would those who believed that this atonement had been made, think henceforth of sacrifices? Animal sacrifices could not be now that the human Sacrifice had been offered ; figurative sacrifices had been lost in the real Sacrifice—sacrifices to take away the sin of the world in

that which had taken it away. There might be attempts again to substitute the figure for the reality—the imperfect for the perfect. Since the struggle of the flesh against the Spirit is so great, since man strives so hard not to be a receiver, such contrivances of the conscience to delude and satisfy itself might surely be predicted. By these untruths others could not fail to be generated, fearful confusions of spiritual objects and sensible, perhaps even of the thing offered with Him to whom it is offered. No doubt such contradictions, if they appeared in the Christian doctrine or worship, would have a long and desperate struggle with the principle which they disturbed, till they should be cast out by it. But what would they have to encounter, if not the principle of Sacrifice in its highest form?

Must not that idea penetrate even more deeply into this dispensation than it did into the old? Must not the presentation of the one real perfect Sacrifice to the Father, the continual thanksgiving for that sacrifice, be the central act of all worship to God—of all fellowship among men? Must not the offering of the worshipper's soul and body as living sacrifices to God be the necessary fruit and accompaniment of this act, that which gives a meaning to all the greatest and meanest services—to the most transcendent and the commonest acts of life? Must not a return to Jewish and heathen notions of sacrifice, with the dark superstitions which accompanied the last, be the reaction against a temper of mind which undervalues sacrifice? Must not that temper of mind at last destroy the very idea of communion between heaven and earth, nay between man and man, and substitute the creed and practice of unmitigated selfishness for the creed and practice of the Gospel?

With these hints which we have gathered from the study of this Epistle as our guides, we may, I think, venture upon the difficult problems which the history of the Church presents, trusting that if we do not find the solution of them all, we shall at least be taught to discern a clear line between that which is the work of God, and that, however intimately blended with it, which has proceeded from an evil, counterfeit, destructive principle.

APPENDIX.

THE members of the Maurice Memorial Union intended, at first, to publish a complete American edition of his works; but in deference to Macmillan's copyrights, held for Mrs. Maurice, this is deferred during her lifetime; and they bring out only the foregoing volume, which Macmillan does not reprint, and of which Mr. Maurice in his lifetime said, that he "would rather all the other works would go out of print than it," a remark easily understood by the readers of his two volumes, *What is Revelation?* and *Sequel to the Same*, in which he discusses Sir William Hamilton's doctrine of the *Unknowable*, and the opposite but equally logical deductions therefrom of Mr. Mansell and Mr. Mill, and asks if the Omnipotent Father *cannot* reveal Himself.

His other studies in the Scriptures are to be obtained of Macmillan in New York, viz.:

The Patriarchs and Lawgivers of the Old Testament.

The Prophets and Kings of Israel.

(The above works illustrate the truth of Coleridge's saying, that the Bible, truly interpreted, is the best manual for the devout statesman.)

St. Luke's *Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

St. John's *Gospel of the Word.*

Christian Ethics (Lectures to the Workingmen's College on St. John's Epistles.)

The Apocalypse; a Vision.

(Of this last work the Nonconformist said: "Never has Mr. Maurice been more reverent, more careful of the letter of Scripture, more discerning of the *purpose of the Spirit*, or more sober and *practical in his teaching*, than in this volume on the Apocalypse." He shows in it that the historical allusions are to passing or recent events, and that the spiritual interpretation of them must needs apply to the catastrophes of the history of all times, which illustrate identical principles and everlasting laws.)

The Doctrine of Sacrifice Deduced from the Scriptures. (Speaking of "Sacrifice" in every aspect in which the Bible presents it.)

The Ten Commandments Considered as Instruments of National Reformation.

The Lord's Prayer. (Nine sermons preached in 1848.)

Grounds of Hope for Mankind. (Three sermons preached in 1867.)

Ecclesiastical History of the *first two Centuries*.

Theological Essays. (Containing the remarkable one on the word Eternal.)

The Religions of the World, and their Relation to Christianity.

Learning and Working. (In which volume are bound up four lectures on *The Religion of Ancient Rome* before the Greek Infusion.)

His last publications were:

Nine Lectures on Conscience.

Twenty-seven Lectures on Social Morality. (Discussing Domestic Morality and Worship, National Morality and Worship, Universal Morality and Worship.)

A new edition of the

History of Moral and Intellectual Philosophy, up to the time of Hegel, etc.

Besides the above works, are many on the Education of Women, Queen's College, etc. More especially interesting to England: *Exposition of the Book of Common Prayer; Dialogues on Family Worship; The Claims of the Bible and Science;* and, in his earlier life, many pamphlets on social subjects· "Christian Socialism;" "Co-operation;" "The Workman and the Franchise." And somewhat later, on the Controversy between Protestantism and Romanism, to which belongs the Essay on Development, which forms the introduction of the English edition of the "Commentary on the Hebrews." Also pamphlets on "Sunday Excursions," the "Opening of the Crystal Palace on Sundays," etc. To a man so vital, truly *nihil humani alienam*.

Sermons preached in country Parishes (posthumous).

Since his death, Mr. Thomas Hughes, M.P., has edited a volume of his fugitive peices, entitled, from the first one, *The Friendship of Books*.

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